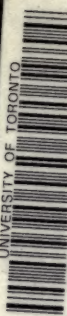


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## INTRODUCTION

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OF all the divine gifts of an indulgent Providence bestowed on mankind there is none more precious, none more restorative, none more beneficent, than sleep. And yet how seldom in their waking hours do men remember or render thanks for its blessings ! Their sense of its value, it may truly be said, remains latent until the faculty is lost. And what is true of sleep is true of Sea-Power. The rest and refreshment which its exercise affords are accepted with graceless unconcern, and enjoyed without conscious acknowledgment. This perhaps in peace-time is natural enough, but in war it is somewhat strange. For war affects the body politic as fever affects the mind ; and fever puts a new value on sleep by threatening to drive it from the pillow.

Failure to appreciate the benefits of Sea-Power can nowhere find better illustration than in the story of the Spanish Succession War. The dominating influence of the British fleet during that struggle has in many of its most important chapters been overlooked altogether. Historians are not entirely to blame. For if they are to do justice to their theme they must

stay ashore ; and if they stay ashore they miss the maritime experience which in Island England should form part of their outfit. When they sit in judgment, men construe facts by the help of others already amassed. They compare a friend's manners, his speech, and his clothes with accepted conventions and established patterns, and return their verdict accordingly. Warfare on land is so constant and so contiguous that the volume of evidence is sufficient to ensure right judgments. But sea-warfare is invisible to all but the participants ; and evidence on the subject is hard to collect ; and, when collected, very seldom understood. The only persons qualified to sift it are the seamen themselves ; and being precluded from learned and literary pursuits, they are seldom tempted to do so. The silence of the seamen throws men back upon false analogies. Would-be enquirers, without meaning any harm, compare sea events with land events ; or contrast some particular episode at sea with another apparently similar in kind. Both processes lead into sloughs of error and quagmires of misapprehension. Some critics have compared the battle of Malaga with Marlborough's victory at Blenheim. It would be as helpful to compare a sonnet of Shakespeare with a sonata of Beethoven. What have the two in common but their status as works of art ? Other critics have contrasted Rooke's expedition to Cadiz in 1702 with Drake's in 1587, Howard's in 1596, and Wimbledon's in 1625. It would be as profitable to seek resemblances in a thornbush, a cabbage, a rose, and a melon. It is the differences that impress one.

However, it is only the very few who have the knowledge to institute maritime comparisons.



The multitude determine the value of sea-warfare by a rule of thumb that is, if possible, even more mischievous. They judge a naval war by what they are pleased to call *decisive* battles; and they only reckon a naval battle decisive if a sufficient number of first-class ships are taken, burnt, or sunk. Thus in the Anglo-Spanish War of 1585-1604, every year begot a new campaign, and every campaign was marked by novel features; and yet fresh in the collective memory of the race stands the Armada alone; because the Armada left the Tagus one hundred and thirty strong, and was shattered and scattered, never to return. Again in the twelve years' war against Napoleon, the Trafalgar campaign seems to close an epoch, robbing of interest all that follows.

Judged by the popular standard, the War of the Spanish Succession on its maritime side seems absolutely colourless. It offers nothing of ornate pageantry that can be set beside the masterpieces of Marlborough. It has none of the alluring quality of the Elizabethan epic—none of the dogged combativeness of the Dutch Wars. It is sadly deficient in the grand pitched battle; and when the lists are set and the barriers down, there is no comfortable procession of prizes to make the story worth reading. And yet in no other epoch, unless it be in the war that has just reached its close, has England been more completely mistress of the ocean ways, or given to the world a more interesting exhibition of the manner in which Sea-Power works.

The problem for this country in 1702 was not that which confronted her in 1740, or in 1756, or in 1778. The problem was not how she should gain command of the sea, but how she should



exercise it. Command of the sea had passed to her after the battle of La Hogue, and left her free to select which she preferred of two alternative maritime policies. She could either use her fleet to multiply her possessions, or employ it to support the struggle on the Continent. Either with her ships she could seize the transatlantic empire of France, or encourage in the Iberian Peninsula the friends of the Grand Alliance. The first alternative was perhaps best calculated to advance her purely material interests; but the second promised to distract attention on the Frenchmen's left, and so afford Marlborough a better opportunity of punishing their right. In other words, the conquest of America would do nothing to curb the ambitions of France; whereas the legions of Louis could not hope to reach the Rhine if they had also to hold the line of the Tagus. This last was the argument which in the council chamber carried most weight; and so, without prejudice to minor schemes of Imperial expansion, it was resolved to send the Grand Fleet to assist the allies in setting their Austrian candidate on the throne of Philip II.

Historians of the Spanish Succession War have persisted in counting the units of the British fleet, and in supposing that the total figure gives an indication of its strength. Such being the case, it is necessary at the outset to insist on the rather obvious fact that, whatever its numbers, a fleet has no stamina until it possesses a dockyard in which to recuperate. Wooden vessels, especially before the introduction of copper sheathing, lost efficiency with discouraging speed; and in 1702 England possessed none of those foreign stations which to-day enable her to grasp the seven seas in her embrace. It was one thing to



send a naval force to Spanish waters : it was quite another thing to keep it there. The first need, then, was to secure a suitable base ; and this was the motive that underlay the expedition to Cadiz.<sup>1</sup>

As all the world knows, little but disappointment resulted from the enterprise. And yet, in spite of apparent failure, the primary object of the campaign was achieved. The Portuguese were won over. It was almost as impossible for them to keep out of the war altogether as for Italy to remain neutral in 1914. But they had been wavering ; and, when Rooke had sailed from Spithead, they were still lending a charmed ear to the gilded promises of Louis XIV. The sight of Rooke's fleet unsettled them again ; and his destruction of the treasure galleons in Vigo Bay brought them over to the Grand Alliance. The promise of mutual co-operation and good-will was ratified by the Anglo-Portuguese treaty of May 16, 1703 ; and from that hour the fleet of England, using Lisbon as its base, was prepared to make its power felt in all the chancelleries of Europe.

Swords were quickly crossed upon the Portuguese frontier ; but it was not there that a military offensive was most required. Strategic attention was immediately directed to where the broad Atlantic and the Mediterranean mingled their seas in a narrow gut at one point not ten miles across. Here was a defile through which all fleets must proceed ; and the fortress of Gibraltar commanded it. Failure to intercept on wider waters the squadron of Brest on its passage to Toulon convinced British Flag Officers that Gibraltar must be captured ; and as delays

<sup>1</sup> August 15 to September 15, 1702.

were dangerous, it was eventually agreed that the fleet should not await the co-operation of an army. This decision may have been right or may have been wrong; but it cannot be stated with too much emphasis that the project committed a maritime force to a piece of work that was strictly outside its province. Something similar was suggested during the conference at Loch Ewe on September 17, 1914; and to understand what the capture of Gibraltar involved, it will not be inapposite to quote what Lord Jellicoe says about the proposal then made to his staff:

The arguments against the operation were overwhelmingly strong. It was pointed out that ships were no match for heavy fortifications such as were known to exist on Heligoland; that direct fire from high-velocity guns with a low trajectory would be ineffective against well-placed, heavily protected and well-concealed land guns; that, even if a storming party were able to land and to capture the island, it would be quite impossible to hold it, situated as it was close to German naval bases, for if we could take it in a fortified condition, it would be far easier for the Germans to recapture it with the fortifications demolished; that it would be under continuous attack by sea and air, and that any attempt to hold it, if captured, would involve keeping the Grand Fleet constantly in southern waters, which . . . was an impossibility.<sup>1</sup>

If the word 'enemy' be substituted for 'German' and the word 'land' for 'air,' then we have in this passage, succinctly and cogently stated, the reasons why it was incorrect for the British Navy in 1704 to attempt the capture of Gibraltar. The ships were unfitted to compete with rocky bastions. If the fortifications were knocked down, there would be no adequate

<sup>1</sup> *The Grand Fleet, 1914-16*, p. 129.



protection for the party of occupation. The Rock in the hour it was detached from its allegiance would be severed from all things that made life supportable. And, in short, the only possible hope of holding the fortress would be to leave beside it an attendant fleet which had no place of refuge nearer than Lisbon, and no English-controlled dockyard nearer than Plymouth. What was needed was an army sufficiently strong to deal with any interference from the land-side, a siege-train sufficient to reduce the works, and a corps of engineers to reconstruct defences. These would leave the ships at liberty to chastise any fleet that attempted to effect a rescue.

The metamorphosis of Sir George Rooke's fleet into siege-train, army of occupation, and corps of engineers, destroyed its potentialities as a maritime factor. And this it is that lends chief interest to the one big fleet-action of the Spanish Succession—the battle of Malaga. Again we must remind ourselves that the French were not at the beginning of the war in a position to dispute our command of the sea. They challenged the fleet of the Grand Allies after the capture of Gibraltar because they believed, and rightly believed, that it had for the time exhausted itself. Critics, remembering Barfleur and La Hogue, still speak of our navy at Malaga as of a giant encountering a dwarf. The simile need not be rejected. But the giant of the story always wakes in his own stronghold from a refreshing sleep following a hearty meal. He stretches his immense frame, and seizes his monstrous weapons. But the English Navy did not wake in its own quarters with strength renewed after copious refreshment; nor could limbs be stretched or weapons seized. The Titan tottered for lack of repose. Half-blind

from drowsiness he had allowed himself to be tied to the chair on which ill-advisedly he had seated himself. Faint for lack of sustenance, he raised the only limb that was free, and found it feeble, flaccid, and inert. He groped for his weapons, only to remember that he had flung them aside as he sat himself down. The dwarf, who (by the way) was a full-grown man and only small by contrast, came on courageously, backed by every advantage that his adversary lacked. Fortune favoured him. But with a single hand the giant clutched him by the throat; and the dwarf, reeling from the impact of those iron fingers, fled away, convinced that the joys of giant-killing had been vilely exaggerated.

Such was the battle of Malaga, the importance of which has been undeservedly overlooked and absurdly underestimated. Figuring as a 'skirmish,' a 'brush,' or an 'encounter,' it has been dismissed as inconclusive and indecisive because no object was attained and no prizes taken. As if to padlock the Mediterranean was not an object which Greeks and Romans would have been proud to achieve; as if Gibraltar was not, on a moderate computation, a prize twenty times as valuable as anything hitherto taken at sea! If Rooke at Malaga had been defeated, England would not only have lost her grip on the Strait; she would have lost her Portuguese base, and her maritime prestige. Whereas her victory—for such it undoubtedly was—confirmed the verdict of Barfleur and circumscribed the power of Louis XIV within the line drawn by ocean at low-water mark. The celebrations at Versailles were merely the clangour of obedient Corybantes striving to stifle the cries of Zeus. They may be compared with the crash of brass in Unter



den Linden after the rout of the Germans at Jutland.

The battle of Malaga proved conclusively to Louis XIV that if the Rock was to be recaptured at all, it would have to be recaptured from the land side. Fortunately for France, the task was an easy one. Fortunately for England, the ease of Louis' task did not escape the apprehension of Rooke. Rooke realised that the Navy alone could preserve what the Navy had laid hands on; and that until an army could be brought from England, 'H.M.S.' Gibraltar required his other ships to stand by and protect her. But the Grand Fleet was at the end of its tether, and an immediate return to England was imperative. All that he could do was to detach a few ships and entrust to them the onerous work of foiling the soldiers of France. Little dreaming that his countrymen had voted him incompetent and would ostracise him as they had ostracised Drake, he hurried home to organise reliefs, and left the Gibraltar salvage squadron in charge of the subject of the present biography.

In 1704 the new director of England's destiny in the Mediterranean was forty-eight years of age; and already, as his selection would lead us to suppose, enjoyed a remarkable record of service. The details of his career will be found in the pages that follow; but, for the purpose of gauging his work as a Flag Officer, they may be briefly summarised here.

Born at Rotherhithe in June 1656, John Leake came of a family that for two generations had served the fleet in the honourable estate of Warrant Officer. His grandfather, like several others of similar rank who rose to high command in the days of the Commonwealth, was a gunner.

His father also was a gunner ; but a gunner of such exceptional merit that he rose to be Master Gunner of England—a high appointment in the gift of the land service, and never before bestowed upon a naval officer. Improving an inherited aptitude, Richard Leake served with distinction at sea, notably in defence of Spragge's flagship at the battle of the Texel ; and afterwards, settling down at Woolwich, greatly improved the mortar, evolved the ' infernal ' or explosion-vessel (used with tremendous effect by Benbow at St. Malo), and invented what he called his ' cushee-piece ' and what later ages christened the marine-mortar or ' bomb.' To his son John he taught not only all he knew about gunnery, not only mathematics in which he also excelled, not only fortification and engineering, but a deep-grained love and admiration and honour for the noblest profession in the world. John at the age of seventeen stood gallantly by his father's side at the battle of the Texel and shared in the glory of defending the sadly stricken Royal Prince against all the Dutch efforts to complete her subjugation. It was a baptism of fire not inappropriate for one of the most illustrious of England's Admirals.

At the Peace of Westminster, which closed the epoch of the Anglo-Dutch wars, Leake, anticipating a period of peace and unemployment, transferred himself to the merchant service. But though the pay was good, the new profession failed utterly to please him ; and after a season he turned again to the service of the Crown. Had he chosen, he might now have had a lieutenant's commission ; but, fearing half-pay and inactivity, he rested content, like his forebears, with the warrant of a gunner. His abilities, it is certain, would in any case have claimed



eventual recognition ; but a stroke of fortune came early to his assistance and raised him to a higher plane. His father, when he completed his 'cushee-piece,' was anxious to make practical test of its efficiency ; and King James II put at his disposal a small vessel of 200 tons built in 1648. This ship, which dropped her foremast and mounted in her bows the deadly pieces designed by the Master Gunner of England, was the first mortar-boat in the Royal Navy and was christened Firedrake. A competent gunner was needed to direct her peculiar activities, and John Leake, doubtless out of compliment to his father, was appointed to command her. The same year she made one of Lord Dartmouth's fleet, which was intended to preserve the Stuart Crown and suffered William of Orange to land and seize it unopposed. There was thus no immediate honour to be had ; nor were the prospects much rosier when in 1689 the Firedrake fought in the battle of Bantry Bay. But the originality of her design had been carefully kept secret ; and the Frenchmen, naturally contemptuous of her size, allowed her, unchallenged, to comewithin range. Then her novel armament began to play, and the plunging projectiles set the Diamant of 58 guns on fire and blew her poop to pieces.<sup>1</sup> This welcome touch redeemed from total failure the English efforts on this occasion, and set a definite value on the newly invented craft. Admiral Herbert sent for the Firedrake's commander, commended his zeal and the destructiveness of his 'bomb' vessel, and promoted him to the rank of captain with command of a fifth-rate of 36 guns.

<sup>1</sup> Troude, *Batailles navales de la France*, i. 193.

Leake's new vessel, the Dartmouth, lost not a moment in adorning history's page. As all the world knows, she was chiefly responsible for raising the leaguer of Londonderry, though that gallant exploit was not conducted in quite the fashion that Macaulay's narrative has made familiar. It was not that Leake's vessel engaged the batteries in conversation, while the two assistant merchantmen broke the boom. The Phoenix and Mountjoy, as the present volume shows, were becalmed to seaward of the barrier, and the fighting company of the Dartmouth, under the gallant direction of their chief, lowered their boats and with axe and crowbar hacked a way through to the starving garrison. The gallantry of the action, which was carried out under a heavy fire, with the momentous issues that hung on the attempt, combined to bring the name of the Dartmouth's commander under the favourable notice of his countrymen.

In the following year he accompanied Admiral Killigrew, who sailed to the Mediterranean to intercept the French Toulon squadron and prevent it from joining the squadron at Brest. The expedition failed in its object, but served to deliver Captain Leake from participation in the disastrous engagement off Beachy Head. On his return home he was appointed a member of the court-martial on Lord Torrington; and it is said to have been largely due to his honest and sturdy independence of thought that the other judges were prevailed upon to withstand the influence of the Crown, and acquit a commander whose only fault was that his plans had been ruined by William's spouse, and his tactics by William's countrymen.

In 1691 the saviour of Londonderry made one of Russell's fleet in the fruitless campaign against



the clever ruses of Tourville, and in the following year, as captain of the *Eagle*, played a brilliant part at the battle of Barfleur. Wedged in the warmest corner of the fight, he earned the lasting admiration of his commander-in-chief, and, though sorely knocked about, repaired his ship in time to take part in the pursuit. As a signal mark of honour, Rooke hoisted his flag on board the *Eagle* when he destroyed the pride of the French fleet under the guns of La Hogue.

In 1693 Leake served in the Grand Fleet under a leadership which had been unwisely put in commission. Killigrew, Delavall, and Shovell shared the command, and their divided counsels contributed in July to the catastrophe that overwhelmed the Smyrna convoy. Of the three joint-commanders, Shovell alone escaped censure; and the retirement of Killigrew and Delavall, by thinning the ranks of the higher command, increased the captain of the *Eagle*'s chance of succeeding to a Flag. In 1694 and 1695 Leake accompanied Russell to the Mediterranean, and not only gained a good knowledge of the theatre where the chief drama of his life was to be set, but materially increased the interest felt in him by the greatest political wire-puller in maritime affairs. In 1696 his father died, and Russell immediately exerted his influence to secure for him the succession to the remunerative office of Master Gunner of England. But Leake firmly though gently declined the honour. His heart was at sea, and perhaps he already looked forward to the day when he should exercise supreme control of a fleet. In the next year the signing of the treaty of Ryswick pushed that day beyond the farthest visible horizon; and Leake, who throughout the war had not been so much as a day out of commis-

sion, began to think of his career as abruptly ended. Happily, however, his friends at Court secured for him employment through the interval of peace.

On the outbreak of the Spanish Succession War Leake hoisted a broad pendant as Commodore, and proceeded in the *Exeter* to Newfoundland. His work there as Governor and Commander-in-Chief merits something more than a passing reference, and will come under review in its proper place. On his return to England in November 1702 he was offered a knighthood (which he declined), and received at last the flag he coveted. He began, of course, at the bottom of the list as Rear-Admiral of the Blue ; but in March of the next year, while acting as Commander-in-Chief at Portsmouth, he received further recognition of the kind he liked best, and, advancing three places in the naval hierarchy, hauled down his blue flag from the mizzen-top and re-hoisted it at the fore.

Not many days later came the treaty with Portugal, and with it the provision of a base in southern seas. Shovell at once rushed out to Lisbon with the vessels that were ready, leaving Leake to follow with reinforcements. The ships, still commissioning, had to be manned, and the shyness of the seamen rendered the task, as ever, wearisome and onerous. Yet such was Leake's unflagging zeal and knack of getting things done, that he actually overtook Sir Clowdisley's fleet before it could enter the Tagus.

Unfortunately there was nothing by way of reward for this timely concentration of force. Lisbon lacked the necessary supplies ; there was no organised system of reliefs from home ; the Government's instructions were vague and indeterminate ; the French contingents wisely remained in port ; and, though the Mediterranean was



entered, the lack of watering-places and fresh provisions sapped the strength of the fleet and drove it back to England with nothing for its pains but a sickening bill of mortality. Nor was there at home either safety or consolation. Leake's ship was among those that still lay in the Downs when there broke upon them the ever memorable and disastrous storm, which in a single night caused London a million pounds worth of damage and inflicted upon the Navy losses more considerable than any battle with a foreign foe. The escape of Leake's ship, when all around were destroyed, seemed to his contemporaries an amazing providential deliverance ; but the miracle may in part at least be ascribed to a seamanship that even experts would have regarded as exceptional, and to a foresight that never put off till the morrow repairs that demanded attention to-day.

At the beginning of 1704 the war underwent a new phase. At the express request of the Portuguese, the Archduke Charles (son of Kaiser Leopold I, and himself in after days Kaiser Charles VI, but now nominee of the Grand Alliance for the vacant throne of Spain) set out in person to seize his new realm and fire the loyalty of his subjects. Travelling from Vienna via The Hague to England (where he was duly honoured as ' King Charles III,' a title which for convenience may be adopted in this introduction), he was received on board the flagship of Sir George Rooke, and under escort of the Grand Fleet proceeded in February to Lisbon. He was at the time only eighteen years of age, and for guidance and counsel relied in chief upon a staff of two political and two military members—Antonio Prince Lichtenstein, his chancellor or prime minister ; Count Zinzerling,

his chief secretary ; with Major-General Count Uhlfeldt and Colonel Count Zinzendorf. Leake, who was fated in the near future to be brought into constant and intimate communication with these persons, did not accompany them when they set sail. He had gained a reputation for speeding up laggards, and, as in the previous year, was left behind to bring on reinforcements.

Before his departure he found it necessary to take coach for London to consult the Lord High Admiral ; and Prince George, purring over him, presented him to Queen Anne, who adroitly conferred on him the accolade before he could utter a protest. It is almost superfluous to mention that he joined Sir George Rooke in ample time to take part in the capture of Gibraltar. Indeed, there were those who hotly maintained that Leake was the first to recommend its seizure and advocate its retention. In the battle of Malaga he shared with Sir Clowdisley Shovell the command of the allied van, and by his spirited leading and forceful methods evoked in the fleet such favourable comment that the captor of Gibraltar lost no time in selecting the likeliest man for its defence.

Sir John, as already noted, in the autumn of 1704 (though older than Nelson at the time of his death) was still on the right side of fifty. He had an open countenance, a high forehead broad at the base, thick eyebrows slightly arched, full cheeks, a florid complexion, a firm mouth fleshy at the corners, and dark, sharp, piercing eyes. His figure was strong and massive and well-set, and he stood firmly on his legs with feet apart. He was neither short nor tall, but appeared rather below than above the normal height, because he was inclined to a full habit of body. Not that he was inordinately stout like Sandwich, or even



corpulent like Keppel ; but his figure must have looked sufficiently plump beside the long lithe frame of Sir Clowdisley Shovell. His dress, though neat, was plain, judged by the standards of the time. For he detested display and ostentation, and could not abide what he scornfully called ' pretty fellows,' with their buckram-lined coats and Steinkirk cravats, and flowered waistcoats smelling of bergamot. The portrait of him by Sir Godfrey Kneller<sup>1</sup> suggests that the campaign or travelling

<sup>1</sup> There are three portraits of Sir John known to us ; and two of these were painted much about the same time. The first, which hangs in the Painted Hall at Greenwich, is from the brush of Sir Godfrey Kneller ; and the second, which hangs in the Guildhall at Rochester, is by David de Coninck, a Flemish artist, whose pictures may be found in Brussels, Antwerp, and Rome. Both canvases can be roughly dated from internal evidence ; for the Union flag at the mainmast forms a feature in each artist's background, and Sir John hoisted this flag for the first time in December 1707. The exact date, however, is in each case happily discoverable. Kneller's portrait was engraved by John Faber, and Faber's mezzotint bears the legend ' Sir G. Kneller, fecit, 1712.' De Coninck's picture must have been completed in the following year, for our author tells us that, when Parliament was resummoned after the Peace of Utrecht, Sir John was for the third time elected M.P. for Rochester, and in November 1713 at the city's request presented his constituents with the portrait which still hangs in the Guildhall.

Faber's very remarkable engraving has served to popularise Kneller's conception. And yet it may be doubted whether this rendering really gives us the most trustworthy vision of the sitter. The face is good, and may perhaps have been the only part that Sir Godfrey condescended to complete. But the figure hardly corresponds with what we know of it ; and the attitude is too aggressive, the gesture too theatrical. De Coninck's portrait at Rochester is a more conscientious study ; and being painted throughout with extreme care may be preferred for details, which it is almost certain that Kneller would at this date have left to his assistants. The third portrait by Jonathan Richardson hangs in the Trinity House, and portrays Sir John at a later age. It is the version chosen

wig was his ordinary wear, and that he could hardly tolerate the full-bottomed variety even for ceremonial use.

In conversation he was his natural self, speaking with decisiveness rather than grace, and emphasis rather than distinction. His opinions, being grounded on common sense and the teaching of experience, had none of the superficial veneer of culture which the multitude call learning. Yet he was never seen to better advantage than in a council of war ; for when the dust of discussion confused the issues, he re-focussed debate on the matter in hand and set things in their right perspective. Nor did he ever allow word-splitting to contend (as it so often does) with action. For, when with solid unanimity his advisers condemned some daring plan as impracticable, he agreed with their verdict, and then, without seeming to do so, set it aside, by proceeding to the next item on the agenda—namely, how this element of impracticability could best be removed.

He had an excellent constitution, and never till the end of his life knew what it was to be sick. He was, in a physical sense, uncomplainingly patient, and could impose on his body unusual

by our author to illustrate his work, and was selected perhaps as representing best what the Admiral looked like when his family saw most of him—that is, in the days that followed his retirement.

It should be added that the author embellished his own copy by cutting from Faber's three-quarter length the head and shoulders only. He may possibly have discarded the rest of the engraving because the plate was too large for the book ; but it is arguable that the face alone was inserted because the rest of the figure was unreliable. The Rochester portrait is unhappily very dark and in consequence difficult to see ; but it may be studied in the photograph specially taken for this work and serving as frontispiece to the present volume.



tests of endurance. He loved the bottle, and drank as much as was good for him ; but none ever saw him disguised by liquor, or his faculties in any way impaired by indulgence. Bad language was at sea a mark of this, as of other, periods ; but he was not addicted to swearing, and, like the Duke of Marlborough, discouraged it in others as well as he was able. He was naturally cheerful and full of good humour ; found it hard to quarrel, even when provoked ; and was ready and willing to forget an injury and overlook an ill turn.

With his friends he was free and open, but grew silent and moody in the presence of strangers. He had none of the easy exchange of small talk, which smooths away the creases of a chance acquaintance. He was a stern disciplinarian, and meted out punishment with a hand that was heavy, but, by general admission, just. And when instead of penalties he had favours to distribute, he dispensed them without bias, partiality, or prejudice. Junior officers looked up to him with awe ; defaulters trembled as they entered his presence ; but all who deserved pity knew where it might be found, and the common seamen, responsive to his fatherly concern, obeyed his every motion with a dog's fidelity. Sir John had a rooted loathing for base motives, above all, for mercenary views of life ; and underneath his jovial humour and love of good living, there was more than a touch of the puritan. His own conduct was based upon fixed principles ; and among the things which he valued on earth, the opinion of his fellow men and the homage of the fashion-loving wise-minded world entered not at all. Though generous in his gifts, he was never one to let his left hand know his right hand's benefactions. He always saw to it that his ship's company attended divine service,

and setting them an example of reverent devotion, was, as his nephew and biographer tells us, a regular communicant.

Like Jervis in after days, he enjoyed the reputation of exacting the last pennyweight in the matter of smartness. When he was a captain, his ship was always the goal to which, at an inspection, princes directed their barge, and the model which admirals piously hoped would be copied by the rest of the fleet. And here, in view of imaginary character-sketches which historians have constructed to support their contentions, it must be emphatically stated that he was fussy to a fault in the matter of punctuality. He may have had as many drawbacks as other leaders of men. It is a consolation in human affairs to discover that no man is wholly divine. But dilly-dallying and procrastination are sins that cannot be coupled with his name. He was up and doing, and had half finished his labours before other men turned out of bed. And this quality (if it was a quality), or defect (if it was a defect), furnishes the key or solution to many of the otherwise inexplicable achievements of his career. The point needs to be borne in mind for the right understanding of what follows. Here an example or two must suffice by way of illustration. In the year of Barfleur the fleet was scheduled to be ready before the beginning of May. It is therefore permissible to suppose that few captains failed to join their ship much later than the middle of April. But Leake was personally in attendance and had the last pin in its place before the end of February. In the year 1707, when he had returned from the Mediterranean on leave, he travelled from Guildford to Portsmouth, manned a squadron there, convoyed the trade to the



Downs, returned from the Downs to Spithead, and was back at Guildford—all within nine days of his setting out. His was the blessing promised to those who (when the hour comes like a thief in the night) are found awake and watching. It was the boast of his family that never once in a long active career did his conduct as a public servant ever incur official censure. In an age as censorious as the age of Anne such a record can only have been established by combining the proverbial efficiency of the British seaman with a preparedness that anticipated the occasion for its use.

Such outwardly in appearance and inwardly in character was the man on whom depended Gibraltar's fate. He had for his allotted task some sixteen ships, but they were battle-torn at Malaga. Accordingly, with his flag in the Nottingham he hastened to Lisbon to repair them and put them in trim. Lisbon, it must be borne in mind, was not an English dockyard, and the Portuguese, who were bound to the confederate cause by no ties but those of selfishness, put every conceivable obstruction in his way.

Meanwhile, about the captured Rock the eagles gathered together. It was not long before eight thousand picked soldiers were encamped against it, and early in October the investment was completed by the arrival of a sea-borne force from Toulon. This comprised (in addition to fourteen sail of the line) seventeen frigates, small craft of all sorts, and four thousand additional men : the whole under a capable French officer, Rear-Admiral de Pointis, who had commanded a division of Toulouse's fleet at the battle of Malaga. De Pointis landed his four thousand troops, left his small craft to aid the besiegers, and with

correct strategic judgment based his main fleet on Cadiz, where he enjoyed the luxury of a comfortable berth, and interposed a superior force between Leake and the garrison of Gibraltar.

The garrison of Gibraltar, which looked for leadership to Prince George of Hesse-Darmstadt, was made up of 1900 marines, contributed by the fleet. They were unaccustomed to siege-work, and they were wearied with sea-campaigning. It was too much to ask them to oppose and repel a regular army that outnumbered them by six to one. All that Hesse-Darmstadt could do was to smuggle through to Leake a report of his extremity and beseech him to come with speed. Leake, hampered at every turn by his faithless allies, worked with unremitting toil to put his fleet in fighting condition, and, in the meantime, perforated de Pointis' blockade with storeships full of good things for hungry men, and messages brimful of cheering words for miserable hearts. Learning on the best available information that the French at Cadiz had nineteen sail of the line, he detained four ships which he had been stringently enjoined to dispatch on other duties, and at the beginning of November set forth upon his mission. De Pointis had reliable news of all that happened at Lisbon, and remembering the part that Leake had played at Malaga, decided that to fight would savour too much of self-immolation, and allowed his adversary to pass by him unchallenged. He had ample opportunity to save his flotilla. But so excellent was Leake's scouting that the English reached Gibraltar unheralded, and swept the French squadron there completely out of existence. We have actual details of eight vessels only, but all were taken, sunk or



destroyed. A single ship escaped for a moment, but she was pursued and retrieved in a trice.

Leake found the garrison at their last gasp. Day by day the enemy had been demolishing the Rock's defences, and the marines, enfeebled by privation, were unequal to the task of repairing the breaches in the walls. The Admiral quickly infused a new spirit. Short-handed as he was, he made Hesse-Darmstadt a present of 250 men, and every day sent ashore a working-party of 300 lusty tarpaulins to rebuild the fortifications. His carpenters remounted all the ordnance on the Rock, and while his armourers refashioned the muskets that were broken, his gunners supplied the garrison with firelocks from the ships. The garrison's immediate needs being attended to, Leake turned himself to the enemy, and, moving his vessels further into the bight of the bay, enfiladed the Franco-Spanish troops upon the sandy neck of land. By these means he distracted them from the work they had in hand, and afforded the weary garrison some measure of repose.

This phase of the struggle was at length interrupted by tidings of renewed activity in de Pointis' fleet at Cadiz ; and Leake, quick to discern that a westerly wind (which would bring the French fleet down upon him) would put him in a most embarrassing position so far as tactics and manœuvres were concerned, shifted his berth to the Spanish side of the bay, so as to be ready for eventualities.

As a matter of fact, de Pointis' activity was not occasioned by any growth in him of a militant or bellicose spirit. His force was merely vibrating to the sound of armies on the march.

When England in the previous year had welcomed Portugal as a maritime ally, the

French, seeing a military opening in the Peninsula, had planned to capture Lisbon from the land side. Already Marshal the Duke of Berwick had advanced upon the new objective ; and opposed as he was by unreliable Portuguese levies and a mere stiffening of English troops, he had little cause to attribute his failure to any human agency. It was only the insuperable difficulties of the land approaches that thwarted him, and he was now anxious to make a second attempt. But at headquarters the French staff were unanimously of opinion that Gibraltar must first be retaken, and Berwick, clinging tenaciously to his own point of view, was unceremoniously recalled. His successor, Marshal de Tessé, concentrating all the French forces in Spain, transferred them to Gibraltar, in order to make its eventual recapture a certainty.

The siege thus became the one outstanding feature of the Peninsular campaign, and the French persuaded themselves that nothing could thwart them, unless the fortress received from England adequate military reinforcements. De Pointis was accordingly instructed to keep good watch, and at all hazards intercept any troopships attempting to run his blockade.

In England intelligence was slow in coming through, and the situation therefore was only partially understood ; but the peril of Lisbon and the feebleness of the Portuguese levies made the need of reinforcements sufficiently evident, and during Leake's absence three thousand seasoned troops arrived opportunely in the Tagus. The English military commander-in-chief, Henry de Ruvigny, Earl of Galway, may not have known to what extent the forces in front of him had been weakened, but he made a shrewd and soldierlike



guess, and decided to send to Gibraltar's aid five-sixths of the troops from home.

News of this prompt and commendable decision was not long in reaching Gibraltar; and Leake, looking at things with a seaman's eye, at once saw that it would be necessary to blockade de Pointis in order to secure a safe passage for the transports. But the Prince of Hesse-Darmstadt held a different opinion, and pleaded so earnestly that the fate of the fortress depended, until the succours came, upon the continued presence of the fleet, that the Admiral allowed his better judgment to be overruled and consented to stay where he was. Meanwhile the winter advanced, the weather grew wild, and the exposed roadstead of Gibraltar Bay became no place for the ships. In a storm, which threatened through foul riding to destroy the whole squadron, so considerable was the loss of anchors and cables, that Leake could no longer stand by the Rock and was forced out into the Straits. Here he plied to and fro for the encouragement of the garrison, until, hearing that the troopships were already on their way, he judged their need to be the greater, and stood westward to protect them.

He could not work his will and close the gate of Cadiz, for the winds grew dead foul and held him in the Gut. But the news of his approach seems to have agitated de Pointis, who fumbled what Fortune threw into his hands and lost a magnificent chance. The soldiers from Lisbon were carried in twenty transports, and these helpless vessels could claim as convoy no more than a frigate or two. Yet of the twenty helpless victims sighted off Cape Spartel, only a single one was captured. Three doubled on their tracks and got back into Lisbon, and no fewer than sixteen

ran safely through into the sheltering arms of Leake. These sixteen brought as many additional troops as the Rock already possessed. The newcomers were a mere handful compared with the growing hordes on the neck of land. But they were Englishmen, fresh, and lusty and strong; and with their assistance Prince George of Hesse-Darmstadt was prepared for a season to face the world.

Leake had now been more than two months from his base, and in assisting the defence of Gibraltar had used up all his own stores and supplies. Even if he could have lived on air, and out of nothing produced what the garrison wanted, the loss of his ground tackle rendered him for the moment helpless; and, while occasion served, he made sail for Lisbon, where he arrived safely in the third week of January 1705.

A great effort was immediately made by the enemy to effect the subjugation of the fortress; and to this end considerable reserves were brought up and new batteries erected on the land side, while de Pointis, whose fleet suffered from nothing but inaction, was brought round into Gibraltar Bay to show the garrison by ocular demonstration how completely they were encompassed. Hopes ran high at Versailles, for the Franco-Spanish forces were literally overwhelming, and it was common knowledge that much time must be consumed before Leake could have his squadron ready for sea. As a matter of fact, the Admiral's labours were unduly enhanced by the vile machinations of the Portuguese; and, in answer to Hesse's appeals for help, he could for a while send nothing more than messages of encouragement.

Meanwhile de Pointis, whose blockade was in reality not more truly effective in Gibraltar Bay



than in Cadiz, rendered invaluable service by transporting heavy siege-guns and mortars, and unending supplies of powder and ammunition. His presence, too, had the moral effect on which the French command had calculated. The defenders of the Rock felt the rope about their neck, and experienced something of the panic that ensues from the horror of strangulation.

In the third week of March the weather grew wild and drove the French fleet from its anchorage. The ships for the time being were scattered, and of those that remained within the Narrows there were only five of the line—the *Magnanime* (74), bearing de Pointis' flag, the *Lys*, *Ardent*, *Marquis*, and *Arrogant*. They were endeavouring to recover touch with the remainder, who had been driven farther east, when, on March 21, they were sighted by Leake and engaged by him off Marbella. The battle that ensued was short and sharp. The *Ardent*, *Marquis*, and *Arrogant* were taken, and the *Lys* and the *Magnanime* ran themselves aground and burnt themselves to avoid capture. The French commander-in-chief escaped in his barge, wriggling away with his life and nothing more; and the remnant of his fleet, hearing of the catastrophe, fled before the wind and halted not until they reached the safety of Toulon.

The battle of Marbella was thus exhaustive. Not a single French piece remained on the board. And it was not only exhaustive: it was in every sense conclusive. The armies before Gibraltar broke up their camp, and, marching away, raised the siege. Their reason for doing so must not be misunderstood. It was not that the gallant men whom Hesse commanded found the Rock tenable and self-sufficing. The Rock was parched and dry and comfortless, and, when cannonaded,

crumbled beneath their feet. It was not that the legions of Louis XIV were unwilling to make the necessary sacrifice. Like the Japanese at Port Arthur, they hurled themselves forward regardless of cost and piled up high mounds of dead and dying before the rock-hewn parapets. The siege, while it lasted, robbed the Grand Monarque of not fewer than twelve thousand men, and an enterprise that had entailed so much was not to be lightly abandoned. But the battle of Marbella taught the French soldiers that their task was hopeless. The Rock could defy them so long as its supplies held out; and its supplies were manifestly inexhaustible so long as Leake kept the sea and could renew them at his will. The only way to take Gibraltar was to starve it out, and starvation could only be enforced by a complete blockade. The battle of Marbella ended all thought of blockade by destroying the forces on which it depended.

To celebrate the great success, Prince George of Hesse-Darmstadt presented Sir John with a handsome gold cup; but with this single token of admiring gratitude outward recognition of the deliverance closes. Historians have been practically unanimous in their assertion that the Spanish Succession produced no engagement at sea after Malaga. Yet, whether we regard the issues at stake, the nature of the attack, or the pieces accounted for, Marbella must in fairness be classified among the memorable achievements of the British fleet. It deserves to be placed beside Rodney's victory off Cape St. Vincent, and Howe's off Cape Spartel. It bears many points of close resemblance and affinity to that grand fighting picture, Boscawen's battle of Lagos. De Pointis, of course, was outnumbered; but against that we



must set the fact that many of Leake's ships were Portuguese, and these not only hampered him at every turn, but in the hour of battle, with indiscriminate excitement, poured their broadsides into his flag. De Pointis took every possible precaution against surprise. He had frigates within and without the Gut, an unbroken ring of watchers along the coast, and sentinels on every church tower. And, in spite of all, Leake caught him unawares and annihilated the detachment that the weather had exposed. De Pointis might have run through the Straits and re-formed on the bulk of his fleet to the eastward. Questioned by his countrymen why he did not do so, he replied that the mercy of Providence must have prevented him, for whatever the number of ships he possessed not one would have escaped from Admiral Leake. And with this amazing tribute from a stricken foe the victory may be commended to the approval of Britons.

The siege of Gibraltar had whittled operations in the Peninsula to a single acute point. The final relief of the fortress, and its absorption as an integral part of the Navy's outfit, paved the way to a new and broader phase of the war, wherein none was destined to figure more prominently than Leake. The rest of his acts are chronicled with so much detail in the following pages that a brief summary may perhaps prove useful here as a clue to guide us through a labyrinth of facts.

On the death of the unhappy King of Spain, whose childlessness occasioned this War of Succession, the various provinces composing his monarchy were not unanimous in their choice of a successor. In spite of Louis XIV's epigram, the Pyrenees continued to exist, and, forming an insurmountable barrier with an average height of

nine thousand feet, exercised upon the struggle a vast, if not determining, influence. But although they could not be crossed, they could at either end be rounded; and much of what follows is intelligible only in terms of two passages or gates. The western gate, the Pampeluna gap, or Pass of Roncesvalles, leads from France directly into the heart of Spain—that is, into the province of Castile. But the eastern gate, or Gerona gap, leads (in local parlance), not into Spain, but into Catalonia. A French army passing through the Pampeluna gap would overrun the Iberian tableland, while a French army passing through the Gerona gap would find itself, topographically, in a cul-de-sac. The armies of Louis the Great, like the armies of Charles the Great, made use of the Roncesvalles route, and ‘Philip V,’ the French candidate, drew his main support from Castile. For that very reason the Catalans, who loathed the word ‘Spaniard’ as heartily as a Czecho-Slovak detests the name of Austrian, opposed the French candidate and were reported ready to welcome the English nominee.

When, therefore, in 1705 the Grand Fleet of Great Britain returned to southern waters, it was resolved in high council held at Lisbon that ‘Charles III’ should be transferred to Catalonia and there set up his court. The capital of the province, the great port of Barcelona, had, it is true, declared for the French. But sound reasons were adduced to prove that the place might be taken; and, when taken, it certainly promised a firm foothold where the nominee of the Grand Alliance could rally all Spain round his throne.

Barcelona, when approached in form, proved much better able to look after itself than the most



pessimistic of its assailants had anticipated. But as in the previous year before Gibraltar, so now again the fleet performed miracles, and Barcelona after a stubborn defence, succumbed to the sea-power of Britain. 'Charles III' went ashore, and was not only proclaimed king, but received with rapturous ovations. All the neighbouring fortresses gave up their keys, and at a single stroke the whole province of Catalonia was won. The new sovereign set up his court, Prince Lichtenstein was installed as Chancellor, favours were distributed, and ambitious plans were formed. The conquest of Catalonia reacted powerfully upon the neighbouring province of Valencia, and along the Mediterranean shores of Spain only Murcia remained loyal to the House of Bourbon. But the Grand Fleet of Great Britain, which was capable of controlling infinitely longer stretches of coast, was obliged at the approach of winter to return to home waters; and Sir Cloudisley Shovell, to whom the main credit for the capture of Barcelona must be given, bade the Austrian court farewell. Before he did so, however, he detached a watching squadron to remain behind, and in the most natural way in the world committed it to the man who had protected and saved Gibraltar.

No sooner had Sir Cloudisley sailed for England, and Leake for a refit repaired to the Tagus, than the French made their answering move. At Lisbon 'Charles III' would have been safe enough as long as Portugal was unconquered. But at Barcelona 'Charles III' had deliberately put himself in check, and his adversaries joyously hastened to 'mate' and win the game. The legions of Louis poured through the Gerona gap and compassed the little Austrian court with forces

that outnumbered those of 'Charles III' at least by twenty to one. It was not possible for them to establish proper lines of communication without subduing the whole of a countryside which teemed with Catalan irregulars; but the irresistible mass of the army of invasion was supplied from Toulon by the main French fleet acting in admirable co-ordination. The walls of Barcelona were battered down, and the last ounce of strength that the garrison possessed was exhausted in vain efforts to repair them. 'Philip V' in person, attended by his marshals and nobility, came in the gorgeous equipages beloved at Versailles to be present at the end of the siege. For the fall of Barcelona meant the capture of 'Charles III,' and the capture of the Grand Allies' candidate meant the conclusion of the war. The great day approached, and the last guns were brought up and trained on the widening breach. In effulgent glory the symbol of the Grand Monarque blazed from a cloudless sky.

And then, even as the sands ran out and the twelfth hour began to strike, Sir John and his squadron sailed into the bay; and Barcelona was saved! The Toulon fleet, flying in mad stampede, severed with its unseemly heels the life-line that sustained the army of invasion; and, abandoning guns and all else, the thirty thousand soldiers that were to have ended the war fled with their king, and their marshals, and their captains, while the sky grew black and the air grew chill, as the sun, like the earthly potentate who aped him, laboured in eclipse.

The relief of Barcelona has been justly compared with that other great event of 1706—the victory of Ramillies; and it is a French historian who mournfully exclaims: 'A battle lost could



not have been attended by results so utterly deplorable.' <sup>1</sup>

When the forces of Louis raised the siege of Gibraltar, they opened to the British fleet the door of the Mediterranean. When they raised the siege of Barcelona, they set the British fleet at liberty to dominate those waters as it would. There were one or two seaports on the eastern coast of Spain that still refused to recognise the suzerainty of 'Charles III,' and against these Leake now turned. In May 1706 he took Carthage, the capital of the Bourbon province of Murcia, and in July he moved against Alicante, a stronghold in the province of Valencia. The town was just one of those places that only an army can capture, having a harbour commanded by the city bastions, and a rock-built acropolis immune from naval guns. Stoutly defended by a son of Ireland, whose name the Spaniards had converted to Mahoni, it flung defiance at the British fleet. Sir John was expecting a military force to co-operate with him; but only a handful of soldiers put in an appearance. He employed them in cutting off the town from the land side and denying it the hope of relief. He then metamorphosed his fleet into the instrument he required; with regiments, corps of engineers, and artillery; with majors, colonels, and brigadiers. These men were too impetuous and foolhardy in their methods of approach, but this only served to accelerate the event. With a reckless bravado and contempt of form, the tars took Alicante at the run. Mahoni flung himself into the acropolis and rehoisted the flag of defiance; but starvation caused him to pull in his belt, and the castle soon surrendered.

<sup>1</sup> Lapeyrouse Bonfils, *Histoire de la Marine Française*, ii. 66.

The eastern coast of Spain was now restored to the obedience of 'Charles III,' and Leake turned his attention to the important islands that formed part of the heritage of the Spanish Crown. The Balearic group were nearest at hand, and it was not long before he had reduced Iviza. Encouraged by this success, he attempted Majorca, and found that the reputation of his fleet was of itself sufficient to throw the islanders into a fever of apprehension. He approached the principal city, sent in an ultimatum, and, with insufficient ammunition to serve his turn, drew up his ships as if for a bombardment. The peremptory tone of his demands and the threat of his guns sufficed, and Majorca made haste to submit.

It was at this happy moment in his crowded career that Leake received a welcome summons to return home on leave. He arrived at Spithead in October 1706 and, greeted by the acclamations of adoring crowds, took coach to London. The Lord High Admiral, Prince George of Denmark, anxious to bestow a signal mark of his royal favour, welcomed Sir John in his bedchamber, and to many kind expressions of regard added a gold-hilted sword and a diamond ring. He then presented the Admiral to Her Majesty Queen Anne, who bestowed upon the saviour of the State a gift of one thousand pounds.

It was remarkable how completely the allied cause in Spain collapsed the moment Leake's back was turned. In 1707, the year of his absence, Carthagená fell to the Duke of Berwick, and the defeat of Almanza seemed complete enough to ruin for ever the cause of 'Charles III.' At such a crisis it was only natural that the Government should dispatch to the Mediterranean the one man capable of saving something from the wreck



In January 1708 Leake was elevated to the most exalted status on the flag-list, and, as Admiral of the White and Admiral and Commander-in-Chief of the Fleet, hoisted the Union at his mainmast-head and prepared to return to the scene of his past successes. As he was on the point of setting out, foul weather drove him back, and with customary promptitude he harnessed the westerly winds with reinforcements for Sir George Byng, who was thus enabled to spoil the first of the French-compounded Jacobite rebellions. Proceeding to his station, Leake quickly built up once more on the east coast of Spain the cause of the Grand Allies. Barcelona was once more in difficulties, this time from shortage of supplies. The French armies in north-east Spain were no better off; but a vast fleet of corn-ships and transports had been organised to relieve them. Leake sighted this invaluable convoy, swept it into a corner, captured it, and fed the famine-stricken with plenty. It was an exploit, for its opportuneness, worthy of comparison with Rodney's similar haul on January 7, 1780, and, for insouciance, with Sir Sidney Smith's capture of Napoleon's guns in the destiny-spoiling campaign which ended at Acre.

Received with natural enthusiasm at Barcelona, Sir John proceeded to bridge that place with Genoa, so that Imperial troops and generals schooled in the traditions of Eugene might troop to the rescue of 'Charles III.' He then supplied the new armies with an inexhaustible granary by his reduction of Sardinia, and finally crowned his life's work by conquering Minorca and so providing the British Navy with a Mediterranean base answerable to its requirements—a base that was to do duty (with varying fortune)

until the substitution of Malta in the days of Nelson.

At the close of the year Leake conducted the Grand Fleet back to England, and found that in his absence both Harwich and Rochester had elected him as their representative in Parliament. He was nominated Rear-Admiral of Great Britain, and on the death of the Prince Consort was made responsible for Admiralty administration. Having established the power of his country in the Mediterranean on unassailable foundations, he was not again required to visit the theatre of war with which his name must be always associated. But the Ministry exacted from him the last ounce of work; and, in addition to his shore duties, he assumed the Channel Command, when there was little but his awe-invoking name to counterbalance the deficiency of ships. Soon, however, the war-party in England fell, and both sides to the great struggle were willing to discuss terms of peace. It was then agreed that France, as a guarantee of good faith, should surrender Dunkirk, which the enemies of England had employed with devastating effect as a base for commerce destruction. Leake was sent to occupy the place, and carried out all arrangements with characteristic thoroughness and success. The next year peace was signed; and the terms of the Treaty of Utrecht, in so far as they benefited England, testify in the most eloquent way to the debt his country owed him.

At the accession of George I, he was removed from all his offices; and, retiring to a house at Greenwich, from which he could feast his eyes daily on the ships he loved, he died there some six years later in complete obscurity.

It is unnecessary to inquire very deeply into



the causes of this neglect. John Leake was devout in his loyalty to the Crown; and the Hanoverian elector, mistaking devotion to the Crown for devotion to Queen Anne, from that false premise stupidly argued a slight taint of Jacobitism. But though George I and his German court set aside the embodiment of England's sea-power, that is no reason why the Muse of History should behave in a manner even more scurvy. And it does become at this point necessary to inquire why Leake has never been allowed to take his place beside Drake and Blake and other eminent sea-worthies; why the national chronicles ignore his name or merely index him as relieving Derry; why other men are given the credit for the things he did; and why the second centenary of his death should be reached before his story should be published in full.

There are four main reasons for this strange neglect, which may first be epitomised and then examined in detail.

1. THE ADMIRAL'S MODESTY.
2. THE PAN-CHURCHILL CULT.
3. THE PETERBOROUGH TRADITION.
4. THE STANHOPE MYTH.

I. THE ADMIRAL'S MODESTY.—The greatest spiritual leaders in the world's history have retired for purposes of meditation to the wilderness and the mountain-top. From the one they have gazed upward into stellar infinitude; from the other they have looked down, as at a tray of children's toys, upon the mightiest structures erected by man. The puny insignificance of humankind when viewed in contrast with the vastness of the universe has not escaped the

notice of those 'who go down to the sea in ships.' Not that ocean by itself is capable of converting the pigmy into the giant. On the contrary, the elemental tempest-throe has sometimes caused those reputedly brave to act like cravens. But the man, already conscious of the responsibility imposed upon him by the weight of human needs, may in the mirror of the infinite cleanse his spirit from the clinging soil of self-conceit. Leake was not born to be the scourge of tyrants, nor to throne himself above prostrate millions. His was the nobler and obscurer task which England ascribes to her patron saint: to bring succour to the distressed in the hour of desolation when all other helpers have failed. As beleaguered city after beleaguered city learned to repose implicit trust in him, so it is evident from the prayers found among his private papers that he put his confidence in a higher power than any this world could afford. No trifles that minister to vanity could ever prevail with him to regard himself other than as an instrument in the hands of Providence. When Hesse-Darmstadt presented him with a gold cup, it was to him merely a token of a brave man's friendship. For the relief of Gibraltar he did not flatter himself, still less expect rewards. He gave Heaven his humble and hearty thanks that he had been privileged to arrive in time.

It is always difficult, and often invidious, to probe the finer qualities of human character. But if Leake's modesty cannot be explained, it can at least be proved by illustrations. His father was Master Gunner of England—an office never before conferred upon a seaman. At his death great efforts were made by the family to secure the reversion for John. Political influence

was used, and no doubt carried weight; but the qualifications of the office were peculiar, and it is permissible to suppose that the appointment would not have been offered to anyone unless he was certain to fill the post with credit. The offer was made, the patent drawn out; and Leake with manly steadfastness refused it. The family went down on their knees, and demonstrated that so magnificent a chance could never again occur. And at the time certainly Leake had no prospects of rising to high command. But if the lure was tempting, he put it aside; and those who longed to know his reasons found nothing to gratify their curiosity.

At the close of his first independent command the Crown desired to confer on him a knighthood. He declined the offer, and for a while succeeded in avoiding its repetition. It was not until he was obliged, in the execution of his duties, to enter the royal presence that Queen Anne found occasion to give the accolade. Even then he would gladly have excused himself had he not been fearful of hurting her feelings.

On Prince George's death they would have made him First Lord of the Admiralty. It was a high office with munificent emoluments. Sir John consented to do the work, only on condition that he was excused all the gilded appurtenances connected with it, including the place and title of honour.

Nothing will strike the reader of this book more than the vast debt of gratitude piled up to Leake's account by the English candidate to the throne of Spain. For lesser services Ferdinand IV of Naples conferred on Nelson a dukedom. Not that 'Charles III' failed to recognise what was due from him. His many letters printed in these



volumes show how clearly he understood that never before had alien prince been so fully and faithfully served. But at the court of Barcelona Leake managed to evade all tangible and material proofs of royal gratitude.

In England, at the close of his greater exploits, they pressed him to accept a peerage. This was admittedly a most signal honour. For though the Army, the Law, and the Diplomatic Service contributed honourable names to the Upper House, it was not then the fashion so to exalt the Navy. Nottingham's earldom and Albemarle's dukedom were bestowed for services other than those at sea; and Torrington's earldom was not so much a grant for services rendered as an opportune political ruse or subtle trick of chicanery. Leake's exceptional claims, however, were duly recognised by the Crown; and the Admiral was not only urged to accept a title, but permitted to select for himself and his heirs whatever grade in the Peerage he preferred. It is at this point hardly necessary to add that Sir John respectfully declined the proffered rank, and courteously refused to listen to those who urged him to reconsider his decision.

The Navy of his time was a tremendous force, as tremendous (allowing for changes of condition) as the Navy of to-day. The deeds which should for ever be associated with his name were the eloquent witnesses of the might of British sea-power; and no one realised the fact more clearly or conscientiously than Sir John. He was proud of the floating world over which he exercised dominion. He rose without fortune or favouritism to be Rear-Admiral of Great Britain. But he stoutly refused to take to himself the credit that belonged to the Navy at large.

His decision, in the words of his biographer, was one that men will admire rather than imitate. But the comment goes astray. It is not on personal grounds that the Admiral's self-effacement need cause regret. The reason that induced him to decline the honour was the very motive that should have impelled him to accept it. The Crown cannot be worn by the sovereign people: it must be placed on a single head. And if Leake had condescended to accept an earldom, he might at least have taught his own and succeeding generations to understand and appreciate the work of the Fleet.

2. THE PAN-CHURCHILL CULT.—That Marlborough monopolises the glory and glamour of the Spanish Succession War is a threadbare commonplace. Opinions may differ as to his character, or as to the allowance that should be made for the temptations that assailed him and the spirit of the age in which he lived. But all men concur in acclaiming the supreme quality of his military genius; and all men agree that he bestrode the age of Anne like a veritable Colossus. Even naval historians, instead of demonstrating what he owed to an unchallenged sea-supremacy, are inclined to endow him with a comprehension of maritime warfare (which he did not possess) and to credit him with the lustre of maritime achievements (in which he took no part).

The Brobdingnagian shadow of Marlborough has obscured the workings of British sea-power at a time when its exercise was least interrupted. But the victor of Blenheim was not the only Churchill.

At the accession of Queen Anne the office of Lord High Admiral, which it had been found

necessary to put into commission as long ago as the reign of James I, was restored and conferred upon Her Majesty's consort, His Royal Highness Prince George of Denmark. The appointment was an outrageous piece of jobbery, for the Prince, however amiable and good-natured, was quite incapable of executing the duties with which he was entrusted. That of course did not escape the notice of those by whom the appointment was made; and they corrected the ill-effects of one piece of jobbery by resorting to another. As commissioners for exercising the office of Lord High Admiral could not be nominated without depriving the Prince of his position, an expedient, quite unconstitutional, was tried, and an 'understudy' chosen. The Prince became the merest figure-head, and the reins of Admiralty fell into the hands of John Churchill's brother George.

'Admiral' Churchill, as our biographer calls him, had John's besetting sins without the brilliance with which the great Duke covered them. He was overbearing, tenacious of power, and inordinately greedy. He was selfish, self-centred, ignorant, and incapable—the sort of man whom Dickens caricatured as Mr. Tite Barnacle of the Circumlocution Office. He specialised in canaries and parakeets, and was said to possess the best aviary in Europe. He also specialised in perquisites; and, battenning on the droits of Admiralty, accumulated in a few brief years a fortune of prodigious dimensions. He had to his credit in Dutch war days the command of several ships of the line. But Sir John Laughton, a tireless investigator of claims of this description, declares that his commissions were paper commissions only, and that, like many other of



Charles II's captains, he drew his pay and appointed a substitute.

On one occasion only it can be definitely proved that he took his ship into action, and that was at the battle of Barfleur. He had his narrow pendant in the *St. Andrew*, and was next ahead of Russell's flagship, the *Britannia*. It was still the custom to swell the line of battle with all available craft rather than make the fleet homogeneous; and next ahead of Churchill in the *St. Andrew* came a 50-gun ship called *Chester*. In Tourville's precipitate assault on the English centre this weak link in the chain gave way, and a gap appeared in Russell's line. It was Churchill's duty to close the fissure, but his knowledge and experience were small. In an hour fraught with peril, the vessel next ahead threw herself into the breach. She backed astern, and, adopting a midway position, tackled two French vessels as big as herself. She was sadly knocked about, but maintained unflinchingly a bull-dog's grip until the situation was saved. It was a relief or deliverance which Churchill remembered with gratitude to the end of his days. The ship in question was none other than the *Eagle*, and her captain was John Leake!

When Admiral George, through family influence, took over the direction of naval affairs, he had an unfailing panacea for all troubles. He put in command the man who had helped him at the battle of Barfleur. It was an admirable arrangement in every way. Brother John would not have tolerated an administration that failed any more than a rival to share his laurels. Admiral George fastened the burden of affairs on Leake, and Leake never looked for any return other than the accomplishment of his allotted

task. Nothing could have suited the Churchills better. Admiral George grew as rich as Cræsus ; and Corporal John, swelling from a surfeit of applause, made Hannibal seem dwarfish by comparison.

Sins deliberately committed seem much less venial than sins of negligence, and the peculation of the Prince Consort's understudy will seem to many his worst offence. But his failure to proclaim the achievements of a service, which is necessarily lacking in the spectacular didactics of military warfare, constitutes a silence, if not a suppression of truth, that we may stigmatise as criminal. In short, if we recall the popular estimate of the fleet in the days of Elizabeth and Cromwell, in the days of Charles II and William III, there is some reason to trace to Admiral George the modern tendency of those who live under Britannia's trident to inquire what (if anything) the Navy is doing.

3. THE PETERBOROUGH TRADITION. — Unlike Admiral George Churchill, the figure of the Earl of Peterborough touches the career of Leake at one point only—and that the city of Barcelona, which (as already shown) was captured in 1705 and relieved under the most dramatic circumstances in 1706. In the expedition which left Lisbon for the Catalan enterprise Peterborough occupied a unique position. He was Commander-in-Chief of all the English land-forces ; and, with Sir Clowdisley Shovell, joint-Admiral and Commander-in-Chief of the Fleet.

Out of this strange appointment has arisen a remarkable heresy which, for convenience of treatment, may be thrown at the outset into the form of a syllogism.

(a) During the years 1705 and 1706 there occurred in Spain transactions that demand comparison with the highest achievements of the English race—transactions that can only be explained on the understanding that they were inspired by the presence of a genius.

(b) The English transactions in Spain during the years 1705 and 1706 were under the charge of the Earl of Peterborough.

(c) Therefore the Earl of Peterborough was a genius.

Now to those who know anything of naval operations and the work of Sir John Leake, this syllogism will suggest a host of questions, contentious and otherwise. The first will concern the source of the argument, and that is very easily disposed of.

By universal acknowledgment the argument is derived from a book entitled *The Military Memoirs of Captain George Carleton, written by himself*. The work was first published in 1728, and a second impression was required the same year. The outbreak of the Austrian Succession War appears to have reawakened interest in the volume, for a second edition was printed in 1741 and a third in 1743. So far as it is possible to judge, the *Memoirs* were not noticed by any literary authority until nearly sixty years after their first appearance. But in 1784 Doctor Johnson, who was particularly interested in Peterborough, got hold of the book and was delighted with it. He received it at bedtime (so he told Sir Joshua Reynolds), and stayed up until he had consumed the last word. Boswell made haste to record the episode; and on the strength of Johnson's recommendation Sir Walter Scott procured a copy. It made an instant



appeal to what Mr. Chesterton has called his 'festive antiquarianism'; and in 1809 he honoured the book by issuing, through Constable, a new edition with a delicious introduction by himself. He was already a blind worshipper of the Earl of Peterborough; and his glowing preface is racy of the soil and must be read to be enjoyed.

Here, then, are two high-priests of literature speaking on a matter they understand with no uncertain voice. What of the volume which they recommend? Nominally a collection of serious, dignified memoirs, it is clothed from start to finish with all the attractions of Romance. The reader who does not know the difference between a firelock and a petard, and is nervously shy of traverses and ravelins, can approach his task without qualms. The book, if not always edifying, is as full of entertainment as an egg is of meat. Good stories and salacious anecdotes are interspersed with a generous hand. There are descriptions of carnivals, tavern brawls, and bull-fights. We pay a visit to a Carmelite monastery and have its relics displayed for us; and on the next page we see an Irish priest stripped to his shirt and flung half-naked into the street. For an opening scene the battle of Solebay is depicted; but instead of compass-points and shifts of wind, we learn how a flight of pigeons, deserting the ship, returned when the battle was over; how a noted duellist, a fire-eating fellow, ran away into safety when the broadsides thundered; and how a sorely wounded officer, conveyed to the hold [*sic*], was eaten by the captain's pigs. Such a string of episodes makes the picaresque story seem languid and dull by contrast; and those who have enjoyed their Baron

Munchausen should certainly add Carleton to their shelves.

The book is not cut into sections or chapters, but it falls, for all that, into three subdivisions. The preliminary portion deals with warfare in Flanders. The concluding portion takes us for a ramble through Spain after the gallant captain has been wounded at Alicante. And sandwiched in the middle (tucked away, it might be said) come the marvellous occurrences of 1705-6, when Carleton (forgetting his memoirs and himself) rhapsodises on Peterborough's genius, the manifestations of which he saw with his own eyes.

Johnson read the book in a bed-time mood, and nodded approval instead of dropping asleep. Sir Walter Scott went much further. He accepted the *Memoirs* as authentic autobiography—as a valuable contribution to the history of the world. He had (to judge from his preface) no grounds for doing so beyond the charm of the narrative; and his want of critical acumen is evidenced by the fact that he did not even discover when the book was published, but accepted the edition of 1743 as the original. To his own edition, with its added charm, the literary world devoted itself; and not only readers of *Quentin Durward*, but staid scholars and students found no more reason to doubt the authenticity of *Carleton's Memoirs* than the *Memoirs of Philippe de Commynes*. Archdeacon Coxe backed Scott's endorsement when, in 1818, he wrote his *Life of Marlborough*: and Archdeacon Coxe was only the first of many accredited historians who followed his example. Of these by far the most important (because he wrote of Queen Anne's war from the Peninsular standpoint) was Earl Stanhope. Not taking a tithe of the trouble that Scott had taken in

the matter of research, he accepted *Carleton's Memoirs* as the gospel on which he based, in 1832, his *War of the Succession in Spain*. Having made his mark as an historian by the publication of his annals *From the Peace of Utrecht*, he decided to link up this work with Macaulay's effort on William III by a full-dress *Reign of Queen Anne*. This work first appeared in 1870 ; and, although in the interval of thirty-eight years which separates it from the *War of the Succession in Spain* he had made no fresh investigations, he states with regard to *Carleton's Memoirs* (p. 195 n.): ' I have no more doubt than had Doctor Johnson . . . of the perfect authenticity of this work.'

Just before Stanhope wrote his earlier book, there arose what may be described as a school of sceptics who rejected the autobiographical origin of *Carleton* and claimed his *Memoirs* as a work of fiction. The founder of the school was Walter Wilson who, in his elaborate *Life of Defoe* in 1830, set the fascinating Captain by the side of Colonel Jack, Roxana, Moll Flanders, and Robinson Crusoe. The school attracted the critics of literature ; and Wilson was followed by Lockhart, Hazlitt, and Doctor George Craik.

Thus was engendered a most strange portent. For from 1832 onwards all complete editions of Defoe embraced among his romances the *Memoirs of Carleton* ; and all sober histories, taking Stanhope as their guide, based on the selfsame work their veracious details of the War of Succession in Spain.

This glaring and ludicrous contradiction made its first appeal to a soldier, Colonel the Hon. Arthur Parnell of the Engineers, who investigated the whole matter with meticulous care and



published the result of his inquiries in his book *The War of the Succession in Spain* (First Edition, 1888; Second, 1905). According to Colonel Parnell there actually was a Captain George Carleton in what we now call the Enniskillen Fusiliers, and what Queen Anne knew as Tiffin's Regiment. He was cashiered for duelling in 1700; was set upon his legs again by the kindness of Lord Galway; remained on half-pay until 1705; in that year proceeded to Spain on active service; was captured at Denia in November 1708, and remained a prisoner until the Peace of Utrecht in 1713. But while rehabilitating the real Simon Pure, Colonel Parnell divorces him for ever from the meretricious memoirs. For the exploits which the book sets on record are at variance with fact. Thus the memoir-writer dilates upon his part at Steinkirk, but neither Tiffin's Regiment nor the real Captain Carleton were present at the battle. Such instances might be drawn into a long category: and Colonel Parnell's list might be extended on the naval side, for the memoir-writer, among many such errors, gives an entirely false account of the discovery and identification of Sandwich's body after Solebay, and states specifically that the *Soleil Royal* was burnt by the English at La Hogue. In addition to charging him with voluble mendacity, Colonel Parnell impeaches the memoir-writer because the memoir-writer blackens and backbites Lord Galway, who was the real Captain Carleton's benefactor. And throughout the work the nineteenth-century soldier detects incessant slips in military phrase which any seventeenth-century soldier would have avoided.

Not content with destructive criticism, Colonel Parnell has discerned in the notorious book a

literary man's artifice to detract from the fame of Marlborough, and with great show of learning has done his best to father the work on that prince of pamphleteers, the Dean of St. Patrick's.<sup>1</sup>

Thus the compilation which has coloured all current versions of what happened in Spain during the years 1705 and 1706 is attributed by one school to Daniel Defoe, and by another to Jonathan Swift.

Where then may the truth be found?

Few modern students, who have read the work, would subscribe to the former ascription. There is in the *Memoirs* no heaping up of corroborative details; no drifting into formless periods and easy-going punctuation. The material is nicely trimmed and compact; the style is epigrammatic and crisp. There is nothing beyond the romantic touch to point us to Defoe.

Colonel Parnell's ascription, more recently raised, is a difficult thing to handle. So far as the subject-matter is concerned, there is ample reason to believe that the theme would have appealed irresistibly to the author of the *Conduct of the Allies*. But the evidence of style is inconclusive. The author of the *Memoirs* has much in common with what we may call the Dean's attitude of mind, his lack of restraint, his hatred of priestcraft, his coarseness, wit, and indecency. But is it possible to suppose that Swift misquoted Horace, and for a whole volume avoided the use of sarcasm, and eschewed vituperation?

The work may, or may not, be Swift's. The verdict is one of 'not proven.' But though the question of the author's identity cannot be established by indirect evidence, and may wait long enough for tangible proofs of a direct kind,

<sup>1</sup> *English Historical Review*, 1891, vol. vi.

this much at least is evident. *The Memoirs of Captain Carleton* can only have been created by an adept in the literary art. There is hardly a page that is not embellished with artificial flowers, or pranked with the pen's conceits. 'Our army marched upon the string and the enemy upon the bow'; 'the vulgar sort stood staring with their hands empocketed'; 'the Jews, in whatever part of the world, are a people industrious in the increasing of mammon'; 'if Ovid in the little Archipelagian sea could whine out his *jam jam jacturus* . . . what words in verse or prose could serve to paint our passions or our expectations'; the Bay of Biscay was 'smooth as glass. A lady's face might pass for young and in its bloom that discovered no more wrinkles.'

In 1728, the year in which the book first appeared, the real Captain Carleton was seventy-six years of age, and reduced to penury and want. It is not unlikely that he had a manuscript book in which he had jotted down the memorable incidents of his life. It is quite within the range of possibility that he hawked his treasured volume in Grub Street, and found a buyer, who, with or without ulterior purpose, wove the slender threads into a fabric of many colours, and sold it as a genuine antique, netting his profits under the guise of anonymity.

This tentative explanation, though it leaves unexplained the main riddle of the buyer's identity, is probably as near as we shall get to the truth in the present state of our knowledge. It partakes of the nature of a compromise; and, as such, it is acceptable even to the most patient and sympathetic of Colonel Parnell's auditors. Not because they hold any brief for the book which he denounces either on sentimental or



on exegetical grounds ; but because the relegation of the *Memoirs* to the limbo of fiction is in Colonel Parnell's indictment merely the exordium or preamble. Having disposed of Carleton, Colonel Parnell proceeds to push his argument ruthlessly to its logical conclusion ; and this, for ease of comparison with the thesis already enunciated, may conveniently be thrown into syllogistic form.

(1) Peterborough's reputation as a man of action is based on the campaign of 1705-6 ; and our knowledge of the part he played in that campaign is derived from *Carleton's Memoirs*.

(2) *Carleton's Memoirs* must in the main be classed as the invention of an imaginative man of letters.

(3) Therefore we are in error if, on the strength of *Carleton's Memoirs*, we acclaim the Earl of Peterborough as the genius who directed the amazing campaign of 1705-6.

Such a line of reasoning is not very strong of itself. But Colonel Parnell supports his thesis by the most comprehensive examination of contemporary authorities bearing on the Peninsular side of the Succession War. And alike in published and unpublished documents, in State Papers, dispatches, and private correspondence, he discovers not so much as a jot or a tittle to support, endorse, or underwrite the military repute of the Earl of Peterborough.

This is the point at which Colonel Parnell has failed to carry his audience along with him. It is felt, and rightly felt, that in his assaults on Peterborough he has knocked down a delightfully romantic figure, and supplied nothing whatsoever to set in its place. In short he has by an effort of research, which is practically exhaustive,

created nothing but a vacuum. Now History deals in chief with human nature ; and to nature, we are told, a vacuum is repugnant. The void, that Colonel Parnell has drained, brings a feeling of nausea to those who have applauded his agile and undefended rapier-thrusts at *Captain Carleton's Memoirs*.<sup>1</sup> For, where much is hazy and problematic, this much is clear and unassailable : that the Spanish transactions of 1705-6 can only have been directed by a genius.

Thus it comes about that so safe and trustworthy a guide in military history as Mr. J. W. Fortescue<sup>2</sup> commends Mr. Stebbing's life<sup>3</sup> of Peterborough, because it fills up again the aching void, and restores to the Earl the soldierly repute of which the Parnellite researches have divested him.

We are now in a position to examine more closely what it is that the author of *Carleton's Memoirs* has tucked away into the inconspicuous middle of his book, or (in other words) what has been claimed for the Earl of Peterborough by every historian of any standing since the time of Earl Stanhope.

The material in question, for purposes of scrutiny, may be sifted into two separate bundles.

(1) What Peterborough would have done if he had not been thwarted by incompetent routineers who were unfitted in a military sense to tread on the same ground.

(2) What Peterborough actually accomplished.

<sup>1</sup> Those who still hold a brief for the *Memoirs* point out that they went unchallenged by historians during the century in which they were published. But this is not correct. They were noticed by Thomas Somerville, the friend of Hume, in his *Reign of Queen Anne* (1798), and rejected as unauthentic.

<sup>2</sup> *History of the British Army*, vol. i.

<sup>3</sup> *Peterborough*, 'English Men of Action' Series.

(1) *Lost Chances, or Might-have-beens.*—When the expedition of 1705<sup>1</sup> entered the Mediterranean, Peterborough (instead of going to Barcelona) would have seized Valencia, made it his base, marched thence overland, occupied Madrid, and by a theatrical stroke set 'Charles III' upon the throne.

This plan, preferred by Peterborough himself as proof of political and military wisdom, has by his advocates been treated with uncritical enthusiasm, or the silent homage of grave respect. And yet, when its foundations come to be examined, they will be found to rest upon a sandy subsoil.

The campaign of 1705, like the campaign of 1589, depended in chief not on military but on naval power. In both campaigns the main strength of the British was put at the disposal of an aspirant to one of the Peninsular crowns. In 1589 the Navy, flushed by its triumph over the Armada, and led by Sir Francis Drake himself, hoped to conquer Portugal for Dom Antonio. But just as success seemed in its grasp, the land-forces, persuaded by the Earl of Essex, leapt ashore, and, proceeding by forced marches overland, carried their pretender to the very gates of Lisbon. That was the measure of their success; and, as helpless as a diver whose life-line has been cut, they fell back, crying for help to the ships from which they should never have been parted. Peterborough had as little appreciation of the value of sea-power as the spoiled darling of Queen Elizabeth; and there is little reason for supposing that in a great enterprise he would have been more fortunate than Essex in a less.

But, someone will say, the course that Peter-

<sup>1</sup> See above pp. xxxvi-xxxvii.



borough recommended is the course on which Wellington based his success. At first sight it may appear so ; but the resemblance is superficial only, and the analogy misleading. The campaign that ended in glory at Vittoria depended on the very element which Peterborough ignored. And in proof thereof it will not be inapposite to quote one of the very few post-Mahan writers who have ventured to impugn the value of sea-power.

When Wellington started from Ciudad Rodrigo, he was about 290 miles from his sea base, Lisbon ; he advanced 120 miles *inland* to the neighbourhood of Valladolid, and then was only 230 miles from a new base, Corunna ; he advanced again 70 miles to Burgos, and by this time he had opened a third sea base only 80 miles away at Santander ; another 60 miles of his advance brought him to Vittoria, and within reach of a fourth sea base Bilbao, this time only 40 miles away. He had marched inland for 250 miles and yet he had shortened his line to his base from 290 to 40 miles.<sup>1</sup>

Wellington's final campaign in the Peninsula is the classic model for the ejection of a French invader by a power that controls the sea. Spain is a bottle, and Roncesvalles its neck. Seize the neck, and you not only deny ingress to all reinforcements, but you effectually cut the communications of those who have entered and cannot get out. If Peterborough by a feint on the north-east coast of Spain had drawn the French armies into the Catalanian cul-de-sac ; and then, wrapping himself in ocean's cloak of invisibility, had doubled back into the Bay of Biscay, and, striking inland from Bilbao, besieged and taken Pampeluna, there would be cause enough for canvassing our

<sup>1</sup> G. Townsend Warner, *How Wars were Won*, p. 233.

admiration. But the projected raid from Valencia made certain of one thing only : the divorce of the Army and the Fleet.

The mention of Wellington suggests another point of contrast between the Second Peninsular War and the First. Wellington, it is true, in the end succeeded : but his task was easy when compared with Peterborough's. For the assistance which the Iron Duke everywhere drew from the soil was (except in Catalonia) heaped into the scale against the General of Queen Anne. The guerilleros of the seventeenth century in a military sense were exactly similar to the guerilleros of the nineteenth. They were, in Professor Oman's happy metaphor, a bubble of quicksilver, breaking up at the touch, and rolling away in tiny and uncatchable globules, ready to meet again later on. But though their tactics were identical, their politics were diametrically opposite. And the prize that was dashed from Napoleon's iron grasp would not have been retained by feebler fingers.

In Wellington's Day the French cause was opposed and thwarted by the Spaniards ; in Peterborough's day the situation was reversed. It has been thus described not by an opponent of the Earl, but (paradoxically enough) by his professed panegyrist.<sup>1</sup>

When it seemed to [the French] that all was lost, when it seemed that the most sanguine must abandon all hope, the national spirit awoke ; fierce, proud, and unconquerable. The people had been sluggish when the circumstances might well have inspired hope ; they reserved all their energy for what appeared to be a season of despair. Castile, Leon, Andalusia, Estremadura, rose at once. Every peasant procured a firelock or a pike.

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<sup>1</sup> See below, p. cxxi.

The Allies were masters only of the ground on which they trod. No soldier could wander a hundred yards from the main body of the invading army without imminent risk of being poniarded. The country through which the conquerors had passed to Madrid, and which, as they thought, they had subdued, was all in arms behind them.

The last sentence serves as a reminder that, although the claim we are considering is a hypothetical claim, there is no occasion to rebut it by hypothetical rejoinders. Not less than twice during the Succession War (as subsequent pages will show) what Peterborough only dreamed of other men converted into substantial reality—and yet without either bringing the war to an end, or contributing anything durable in the way of success.

Therefore, unless something more circumstantial than this hypothetical claim can be adduced in Peterborough's favour, it is much to be feared that the fabric of his reputation totters.

(2) *What then do his advocates maintain that Peterborough actually accomplished?*—A full and adequate answer to the question can only be supplied by the many well-known biographies of the Earl that every library contains,<sup>1</sup> and by the historical monuments raised by Earl Stanhope and the feudatories who have enlisted under his banner. Briefly the voluminous dossier may be summarised as follows :

After his project for a raid on Madrid from Valencia had been rejected, Peterborough accompanied the fleet to Barcelona where the army was put ashore. The town was incompletely invested,

<sup>1</sup> Among others, those of Major G. Warburton, 1853, and Colonel Frank S. Russell, 1887.



and three weeks went idly by without any material result. Then Peterborough took the situation in hand. He saw that the key to the city was the detached fortress of Montjuich. He ordered an assault upon it, and, gallantly putting himself at the head of the troops, made speedy capture of works that had been thought impregnable. Thus the walls of Barcelona fell flat, and 'Charles III' was established firmly on Spanish soil. But the restless spirit of Peterborough craved for further conquests. All the strong places of Catalonia laid their submission at his feet, and, as they did so, he planned the subjugation of Valencia. Bidding farewell to the King, he marched with delicious audacity through the heart of a hostile countryside, outwitting his foes by cunning subterfuge, or Odyssean wiles. Arriving before the capital of Valencia, he summoned the town, and at his threats the gates were opened, and, triumphing, he entered. He had now the base he required for his march into the interior, and he summoned the King to join him at once and march with pomp to Madrid. In this supreme hour, on which the fate of nations depended, he learnt with indignation that the wretched monarch had allowed himself to be entrapped in Barcelona. Without a word of regret for his brilliant scheme (thus a second time frustrated) he marched to the relief of the beleaguered city. He found things worse than he anticipated. Barcelona was surrounded on all sides, and the force at his back was too exiguous to allow him to attempt to break through. At a glance he saw that the relief of Barcelona could only be accomplished by way of the sea. He marched to the coast, and, having dictatorial powers, summoned the fleet to the rescue. His missives received no answer, and

to the amazement of his followers he plunged into the ocean. A single boat sustained him. He went this way and that, covering miles of barren foam. At last patience rewarded his intrepid toil. He sighted at night a ship of the line. She was the *Leopard* perhaps, or perhaps the *Somerset*. From on board he issued his orders. The fleet gathered round. The Earl transferred himself on board the *Prince George*, where flew the flag of Admiral Leake. His own flag was now hoisted to the maintop, and to the amazement of the world, and to the consternation of the foe, he brought relief to the doomed King and a city at the point of surrender. Except for the dilatoriness of the naval officers concerned, he would without doubt have captured the whole of *Toulouse's* fleet which a few hours before had been berthed in the bay. This triumph completed, he again proceeded to *Valencia*. Again the road was opened to *Madrid*: again the prize lay in the hollow of his hand: again he summoned the King to pick up the sceptre that lay at his feet. But '*Charles III*' listened to scheming understrappers. He chose his own route and joined the Earl of *Galway* in his camp at *Guadalaxara*. *Peterborough* with a handful of soldiers proceeded there also, offered to assume supreme command, and, being repulsed, cast upon the Allies the dust from off his feet. Money was what was wanted. He proceeded at once to *Genoa*, raised a loan of one hundred thousand pounds, and was back again in *Spain* almost before he had been missed. Once more the embers of a dying fire glowed at his coming. But now the insensate government at home summoned him on the instant to return. And the very moment that his back was turned, came *Almanza* and the ruin of the Allied hopes.

Before this concatenation of claims, or any separate link, can be examined, it will be necessary to discover what was the exact position that Peterborough occupied during the years 1705-6. If the Earl of Galway could be trusted to command in chief by land, and Shovell or Leake by sea, what need can there have been for further direction? Because Peterborough had powers that apparently overrode those of anyone else, it has been too readily assumed that his appointment was intended to prevent a clash of conflicting opinions as between the Army and the Fleet. This is the view that our author takes, though every action of the Earl contradicts it. It is a view that borrows some countenance from the Cadiz campaign, and the failure of Rooke and Ormonde to understand one another. But the campaign of 1702 did not engender inter-service strife of the kind which, for example, blazed out at Rochefort in 1757; there was, in fact, nothing that called for special legislation. And if precedents are to be taken into account, it must not be forgotten that, at Gibraltar, Leake and Hesse-Darmstadt had just provided the most perfect example of combined work that the annals of any country afforded.

It is not by shrewd guesses, nor yet by a scrutiny of Peterborough's Instructions or the terms of his appointment, that we shall discover the reasons why the Earl was sent out to Spain. Nothing could be more efficacious than official verbiage to screen and hide the very thing which we wish to discover. The only safe clue to the real reason for the appointment of the Earl of Peterborough is afforded by the life and antecedents of the Earl of Peterborough prior to his appointment.

Charles Mordaunt, born in the year of



Cromwell's death, came of a noble and illustrious family, and among distinguished connexions could trace through his paternal grandmother direct descent from Howard of Effingham who overthrew the Armada. It is believed that he was educated at Eton ; and it is certain that he matriculated in his sixteenth year at Christ Church College, Oxford. But before he had been a year in residence, he left the university, and went to sea with his mother's stepbrother, Captain Herbert (afterwards Earl of Torrington), who was commissioning a ship for Narbrough's expedition against the Algerines. Whether young Mordaunt liked or disliked the naval service there is no evidence to show. The most memorable incident in his brief career at sea, an incident that attunes itself with all that we know of him, was an attempt to impersonate the part of the Bristol's Chaplain. He sat up until four in the morning composing a sermon, and Parson Teonge, the famous diarist, had his work cut out to prevent the young sprig of nobility from usurping his pulpit.

Mordaunt remained in the Navy for six years, and undoubtedly spent some of the time at sea. But in 1680, having in the interval succeeded to his father's viscounty, he withdrew from the service without having earned a commission ; and at the age of twenty-two threw himself with eager abandon into the more congenial excitement of the political arena. It was the hour when the great Exclusion Bill was cleaving society into Whigs and Tories ; and Mordaunt, who never hesitated to talk republicanism in the throne-room of kings and atheism in the presence of bishops, joined forces with the Earl of Shaftesbury. He was admitted to the friendship of Lord William Russell, and became the intimate of Algernon

Sidney. Naturally enough he was implicated in the Rye House Plot, and characteristically enough he eluded the imputation of guilt.

When the exclusionist cause was overthrown and the Duke of York became James II, Mordaunt made a speech in the House of Lords that set every tongue in motion; and then, before his hearers could recover from their amazement, vanished from England and laid his talent for intrigue at the feet of William of Orange. Bishop Burnet, with every opportunity for first-hand information on the subject, tells us that it was Mordaunt who first propounded the audacious design of placing William on the English throne; and certainly not even Russell or Herbert contributed more to the success of the invasion scheme. When William landed in Torbay, Mordaunt flamed on ahead, and like an inspired precursor, or courier-in-chief, opened the gates of towns with a touch, and prepared a royal road to London. William's gratitude knew no bounds. He heaped on the young man's shoulders not undeserved rewards, among others the Earldom of Monmouth. Astute and cunning, but vain-glorious, wayward, and egotistical to a fault, the would-be preacher of sermons now felt like a king-maker, and resolved to keep a sharp eye on the Dutchman in case another change should be necessary. A vaunting braggart from his youth, he felt that nothing was properly done unless he was there to do it himself.

In the critical days that followed the Revolution, he found opportunities such as his heart desired as a member of the board that in William's absence gave counsel to Queen Mary. During the Beachy Head campaign the strategic innovations of Torrington earned his unmixed contempt, and he

magnanimously offered to go down to the fleet, depose the Admiral, and command in chief himself. That Torrington was his uncle, and that he himself had never risen above the rank of midshipman, were trifles that he manfully brushed aside, if, indeed, they ever occurred to him. Meanwhile, the most secret transactions of the board were daily communicated by letter to the enemy ; and among Mary's counsellors there was a general verdict that the Earl of Monmouth must be to blame, for the obvious reason that the letters ceased whenever he was prevented from attending a session. The Duke of Leeds, without combating the probability of Monmouth's naughtiness, surmised that he was endeavouring to ruin some fellow-counsellor rather than overthrow the reigning house. Whatever the explanation, it is certain that the Earl showed an unenviable skill in setting everybody else by the ears ; and that Mary, at the end of her wits and her patience, asked William for relief from such an incubus.

It was not, however, until 1692 that this master of illicit artifice forfeited the King's regard. In that year he took it upon himself to criticise the conduct of the war in Flanders and William, touched in his tenderest feelings, denied him the royal cabinet. For three years the Earl was an exile from court ; but during that time he contrived to make himself even better known to the world at large. The fame of his gardens, his wall-fruit, and his flowers ; the splendid hospitality of his table ; his cuisine, his poems, his speeches, his amours—set every soul in London talking about him ; while those who were lucky enough to be admitted to his company could never decide which sparkled the more—his wine or his conversation. At Will's in Bow



Street, Covent Garden, he would keep a circle of politicians spell-bound by the range of his knowledge and the depth of his insight ; and then passing through Russell Court he would stop to have his shoes rubbed and his periwig powdered, and purchasing a plump fowl and a dozen of cabbages, tuck them, in the sight of all men, under his arm and carry them home himself. The Beau Monde as it conveyed itself from masquerade to coffee-house, from the Puppet-show under the Piazzas to the Italian opera at the Haymarket, vowed that the Earl was a prodigious noble fine fellow, which without any question he was.

And whatever may be said in criticism of him, this much admittedly stands to his credit : that in letters and learning he was a liberal and enlightened patron. Out of his own pocket, and as First Commissioner of the Treasury, he set himself to encourage those who were enriching their country rather than themselves. John Locke, Isaac Newton, and Berkeley the metaphysician were among those he befriended ; and Gay, Arbuthnot, Pope, and Swift made no secret of their indebtedness to him. And the rôle of Patron was one that appealed to the Earl, if not from altruistic, at any rate from the most laudable, motives. There was something in men of letters that appealed to the very best that was in him ; and he spoke so well and wrote so well that, under other circumstances of birth and upbringing, he might himself have made one of them. Their thoughts and conceptions appealed to him ; their lines not only remained captive in his memory, but received a vogue when he repeated them. When he sat and chatted with the Augustans his licentious ribaldry gave place to appreciative comment, and his blasphemous attacks upon

religion and morality dropped like the mask of an intellectual poseur. To men of letters he spoke like a man of letters, and his audience, thinking mainly of his rank and of his power, hailed him without flattery as a second Mæcenas. None can blame them : and yet it is important to bear in mind that they had only one medium in which to express their gratitude. Without intention or desire to deceive, they extolled their patron for qualities which he most patently lacked, and lavished their praise on virtues which he never possessed. Marlborough was the most gifted captain that the age produced, and his failure to inspire more than half a dozen lines of quotable verse does not alter the fact. And if literary London conspired to enthrone its literary idol by the side of Cæsar and Alexander, that only shows that literary London was a poor judge of military affairs. Nature had gifted the Earl with a grace of diction, an ear for music, and a faculty for fitting the aptest words to things ; she had spoiled him with wealth, and orders, and power, and titles of nobility. He degraded his muse with unworthy innuendo and caustic epigram : he warped his soul in plot and counterplot, and lost his sense of cleanness and integrity. It is only fair, then, to turn from the poets who worshipped him to the politicians who judged him by the career he had chosen, and who at least could speak without being influenced by the hope of favours to come. Godolphin and Bolingbroke were no mean judges of political performance, nor were they dependent on other men's opinion. In all but one thing they were the poles apart. But they agreed in extending to the Earl an unmitigated contempt. Alberoni, who was at least free from insular prejudice,

summed him up towards the end of his life as 'a most pretentious fool and consummate black-guard.' Even Swift, whose delicious *jeu d'esprit* *Mordanto* has been the ground for half the homage paid by after generations, admitted in a sudden burst of candour that the Earl was the 'ramblingest lying rogue on earth.'

In 1696, after three years of banishment from the court, he was once more restored to favour. But the candle of intrigue had not burnt down, and the moth had wings to be singed. In Fenwick's conspiracy he was deeply implicated, and perhaps through lack of practice flew too near the flame. He was removed from the Privy Council, at a blow lost all his places and pensions, and was incarcerated in the Tower. His sentence, however, did not imply the dishonour it would carry to-day. The game of politics, involving as it then did the fall of crowns and the ruin of noble houses, was played with a terrible seriousness; but it was the game of politics none the less, and three months of the Tower in 1696 meant hardly more than what shame we associate with a thrashing at the Polls. And the victim of this set-back, combining as was his custom a dash of luck with a talent for rehabilitation, was soon the toast of every fashionable resort from Mulberry Garden to Temple Bar. He passed through the Tower's gloomy portals as Earl of Monmouth. He emerged in becoming mourning for his uncle as Earl of Peterborough.

There is no space here to do justice to one hundredth part of the imbroglis in which he was concerned, the feuds he stirred up, the scandals he occasioned. But without straying a foot's breadth from the path of solid fact, it may be stated that there was no politician in England,



however highly placed, who did not secretly fear him, and no political party, however independent its aims, that would not have made some sacrifice to secure his support, or avoid incurring his censure. Behind his back many odious things were said of him ; before his face, of men, very few could resist his fascination, and of women, absolutely none. As the star of William began to decline, the Earl, at peace with his political foes, sharpened his wits and his talent for rhetoric by translating the *Olynthiacs* of Demosthenes. As the star of Marlborough began to rise, he shifted his allegiance to Duchess Sarah, and prepared to open a new chapter of his life in the warmth of that lady's favour. In 1702, casting a horoscope, he was convicted of wire-pulling the Malmesbury election by the exercise of undue influence.

To judge by some of the books that have been written about the War of Succession in Spain, one would suppose that Charles Mordaunt, Earl of Peterborough, was a soldier tried in the hard schools of discipline and experience, who only required a field of endeavour in which to emerge from obscurity to fame. Enough has been said to show that his firmament was political ; and that, among a cluster of constellations, no celestial body attracted more eyes than himself. But not for him was it to shine with the brilliance of Somers, or with the fixity of Nottingham. He sped through the sky like some portentous comet, behind whose baleful head spreads an inexplicable tail, incandescent with electric possibilities.

Why, then, in April 1705 was he sent to Spain ? Why was he made, jointly with Sir Clowdisley Shovell, Admiral and Commander-in-Chief of all the maritime forces employed : and this, although

he had never held commissioned rank in the Navy, or distinguished himself in the service by anything but a midshipman's pranks? Why was he elevated to a rank at sea which none (without the necessary experience) had ever filled except a Prince of the Blood? And why, in addition to his naval rank, was Peterborough made General and Commander-in-Chief of all the land forces that made part of the expedition: and this, although he had never held, either at home or abroad, any military command?

Not because anyone supposed that he could supplement the naval knowledge of Sir Clowdisley Shovell. Not because there was anything that he could hope to furnish for the better equipment of Hesse-Darmstadt. As a statesman it was that he had won renown, and as a statesman it was that they sent him to Spain. He was not expected to conduct campaigns or take fleets into action. His position was to be analogous to that of the nobleman who is called to exercise in a distant land a viceregal authority. England, in order to distract the French attention from the main theatre of war, stood committed to the Peninsular enterprise. That meant that the majesty of her naval power was to serve the cause of an alien prince. Such service, unless controlled by suitable restrictions, might prove highly prejudicial to the national safety. It would never do to make the Royal Navy entirely subservient to a youth like the Archduke Charles, or to a crafty continental plotter like his chancellor Prince Lichtenstein. Peterborough, with a viceroy's pre-eminence over admirals and generals alike, accompanied the expedition to represent his country's interests. Without an equal for sharp practice and political prestidigitation, he held a

watching brief for Queen Anne. Never happier than when staggering the English House of Peers, he was little likely to be imposed upon by a handful of foreign satraps. And if it was true (as many said) that he had won the sceptre of England for William III, he might be reasonably expected to find a field for his talent in the struggle for the Spanish crown.

Marlborough was a party to Peterborough's appointment, and by Peterborough's critics has been blamed for his failure to foresee the mischief that was bound to ensue. Some censors, indeed, have gone so far as to insinuate that he would not allow the laurels to grow anywhere but in Flanders, and therefore sent to the Peninsula one who was little likely to figure as a military rival. But such a suggestion is mere foolishness. It ignores the Duke's desire to humble England's enemies. It ignores the real interpretation of Peterborough's choice. If Marlborough harboured in his breast any personal motive, it was possibly a desire to see Peterborough's back: not from any feelings of jealousy, but because he thought that England would be in a more wholesome state if Peterborough was out of it.

Peterborough, then, proceeded to Spain vested as a plenipotentiary; and our next business is to consider how he exercised his trust. In dealing with this aspect of the question, we shall derive no assistance from a minute survey of the many points of minor importance which loomed so large in the hour they were brought forward, and which have embittered the controversy ever since. It will be better to concentrate on the greater issues, especially those where there is a sufficiency of fact to guide us to a warrantable inference.

The story really begins at Gibraltar, where the



crowd of notabilities, who were proceeding to the Mediterranean in Sir Clowdisley Shovell's fleet, were joined by Prince George of Hesse-Darmstadt. With him came also another staunch supporter of the Austrian cause, named Basset-Y-Ramos. By some he has been described as a fugitive from justice, by others as a sculptor. In either case, he was a native of Valencia, a man of mettle, and, as events were to prove, an ally worth welcoming. At the moment of his arrival none would have cast him for a big part in the drama that was even then unfolding. But then none would have wasted much attention on a certain civilian member of Lord Peterborough's staff, the eminent London physician, Doctor John Freind. He was there ostensibly to provide the expedition with the best of medical advice; and none could suspect that fate had cast him for a rôle as big as was afterwards played by Tobias Smollett in Vernon's campaign of 1741.

Loosing from Gibraltar, the fleet proceeded into the Mediterranean, and the higher dignitaries were soon assembled in Sir Clowdisley's state-room to consider the advisability of Peterborough's proposal to march upon Madrid from Valencia, as in former days with William III he had marched upon London from Torbay. The motion, as has been seen, was negatived, and Peterborough, not without cause, was highly incensed. But, though the town of Valencia itself was not attempted, a footing in the province was obtained at Denia, a seaport which yielded to five of the line and two bomb-vessels sent against it by Sir Clowdisley Shovell. The capture of the place seemed to the Austrian party an event of excellent augury: and 'King Charles' was pleased to hold it with a garrison over whom he set the

vague mysterious Valencian, 'Colonel' Basset-Y-Ramos.

Further counsels being held, a resolution was taken to attempt Barcelona ; not only because the city was the capital of Catalonia, which more than any other Spanish province favoured the Austrian interest ; not only because the harbour was reckoned the best of all on the Mediterranean seaboard of Spain ; but because it was reported upon highly credible authority that the defenders of the town were in numbers insignificant, and the fortifications in a miserable state of disrepair. These, of course, were weighty arguments ; and they were heavily reinforced by two others of a personal nature. The Count of Cifuentes, an influential Spanish grandee, who cherished a consuming hatred for the Bourbon faction, promised to raise the Catalan levies, and cut off on the land-side all chance of succour for the town. Moreover, the expedition also could count on the services of one to whom every bastion and curtain in Barcelona was as familiar as the palm of his own hand.

Prince George of Hesse-Darmstadt, now in his forty-third year, was a soldier of wide and varied experience. In the imperial service he had done good work in the Turkish wars and had played a distinguished part at the battle of Mohacz. In 1690 he had transferred himself to the English service, and fought gallantly at the battle of the Boyne. At Aghrim he confirmed the good impression he had made, and distinguished himself again at the sieges of Athlone and Limerick. At the conclusion of the Irish wars, he had returned to his native land, and had been sent by the Emperor, with 5000 reinforcements, to support the war in Spain. Here he was entrusted with

the defence of Barcelona, a service which gave him a European reputation, and doubtless determined in 1704 his choice as defender of the Rock. There is no doubt that in Sir Clowdisley Shovell's cabin he was listened to with the most favourable attention; and when he gave it as his considered verdict that Barcelona could be taken, and should most certainly be attempted, all present, save one alone, agreed with him.

The one exception was Peterborough, who opposed the plan with all his might. It is quite unnecessary to consider what alternative scheme he had, or what grounds underlay his decision. Such considerations are impertinent. The point is that Peterborough objected to the proposed attack upon Barcelona, and was entirely and absolutely within his rights in doing so. It was his business to judge whether it was in the interest of the Grand Alliance, and of England, that the Austrians should employ the British fleet to capture Barcelona. He decided in the negative; and no member of the expedition, either soldier or sailor, could justifiably question his right to decide, or analyse the grounds of his decision. In short, if he had been another kind of man, with a will of iron and a backbone of adamant, he would have put his foot down, and forbidden the project. And there the whole matter would have ended. But, instead of employing his undoubted right of veto, he contented himself with declaring that the scheme was impracticable, and then left the impracticability of the scheme to prove that his decision was correct.

Meanwhile, as he waited for some set-back or obstacle to put the Austrians in their place, the Navy with its usual efficiency and amazing silence put the entire Army ashore: bag and



baggage, entrenching tools, weapons, ammunition, and complete impedimenta. The sea ran mountains high. No boatload looked as if it could ever reach dry land in safety. But within a few hours ten thousand men were set ashore without so much as a single casualty. For the moment, at any rate, it certainly looked as if Sir Clowdisley was forcing Peterborough's hand.

But it was not so really. Ashore the scheme which Peterborough condemned did appear impracticable. The place was well garrisoned, and its picked troops were in fine fettle and magnificently led. As for the walls, they showed no want of repair. The town perhaps was ill-fortified when compared with a creation of Vauban or Coehorn. But it could hold its own with comfortable ease, and promised to yield to nothing but the patient sap, with its antlike toil and merciless fatigue. For such a method of approach the expedition was not prepared ; and the wisdom of Peterborough in condemning the project brought many converts to his side. The scheme was in the eyes of all such demonstrably impossible.

The Austrian party, if so they may be called, pleaded for three weeks' delay, and Peterborough very pleasantly agreed to their request. But during this interval he did not raise a finger to help them ; and, in spite of all that his critics have said, there was no earthly reason why he should. He had made up his mind to defeat their scheme ; and his method of wreckage was a masterly inactivity. The three weeks ended. Nothing whatsoever had occurred. And Peterborough foreclosed. His instructions permitted him to lend assistance to Victor Amadeus of Savoy, who was attempting to wrest from the grip of France the Spanish possessions in Italy.

He therefore ordered the re-embarkation of the troops ; and, summoning his counsellors round him again, tried to turn their thoughts in a different direction.

He found himself in a minority of one.

The Navy, under the lead of Sir Clowdisley Shovell, crossed the house in a body and joined the opposition. For evidence of this there is no need to hunt up ships' logs or consult the minutes of councils of war. The matter is put with admirable lucidity and succinctness by Peterborough's chief trumpeter, the author of *Carleton's Memoirs* :

And what was more uneasy to him, the murmurings of the sea-officers, who (not so competent judges in what related to sieges) were one and all inclined to a design upon Barcelona ; and the rather, because, as the season was so far spent, it was thought altogether improper to engage the fleet in any new undertaking.<sup>1</sup>

The logic of the fleet was, as one would expect, of a rough and relentless kind. Without its aid nothing could have been attempted against Barcelona. Without its aid nothing could be attempted elsewhere. There was nothing to show that an expedition elsewhere would be attended with more success than had been achieved at Barcelona. Therefore, unless complete success were achieved at Barcelona, no aid would be forthcoming for projects elsewhere.

*Aut Barcelona aut nihil !* Peterborough was driven into a corner. Either he must eat his words, or return to England empty-handed. It was an unpleasant dilemma, on the horns of which many men would have been impaled. But to Peterborough it was merely one of those

<sup>1</sup> Sir Walter Scott's edition, pp. 124-5.

problems which he had grappled with all his life. He needed such an impasse in order to show the dexterity of his counter-thrusts, the sprightliness of his fence.

The besiegers had not been three weeks before Barcelona without discovering what they thought to be the key to the puzzle confronting them. On the north-east of the city, where the troops had landed, the ground was flat and unpromising. But to the south-west there was an eminence from which there frowned the strong works of Montjuich. The matter was not susceptible to proof ; but many believed that, if only the fortress of Montjuich could be captured, the town itself would not prolong its resistance. The design, however, was ambitious and would require an absolutely united effort, which Peterborough's lethargy had so far rendered impossible.

Worsted by the Navy in his own chosen game of statecraft, he vaulted with Machiavellian agility, and, turning a complete somersault, exclaimed in effect, ' If co-operation with Savoy is out of the question, then, I'm afraid I must trouble you all to back me in an assault on Montjuich.' Sir Clowdisley Shovell nodded approval. The Prince of Hesse-Darmstadt thumped the table with his fist. Prince Lichtenstein beamed his satisfaction. For the first time since the fleet had sailed from Lisbon, everybody was in complete accord. And Peterborough had not merely saved his face ; he had crowned himself with the halo of initiation, of which (for obvious reasons) no one wished to deprive him.

The assault on Montjuich, histrionically planned, lacked nothing of dramatic effect. There was a night march, a partial surprise, and a preliminary measure of solid success. Then the



defenders rallied. Reinforcements hastened out from the town: and the Prince of Hesse-Darmstadt, who led the attack, was wounded, spoke to his men brave words of good cheer, and in that instant fell suddenly dead. His loss was a prostrating, staggering blow that was bound to infect every unit of the command: for among his own lieutenants there was obviously none who could hope to take his place. The day was lost, or would have been lost, but for Peterborough who came up with the reserves. The death of Gibraltar's hero suddenly confronted him with a crisis which he had not expected, and had not been trained to meet. He rose to it, as if to the manner born, and as (it is to be hoped) many another Englishman of meaner clay would have risen when similarly faced. He put his spare, cadaverous little figure at the head of the troops, and, rallying them like the belted earl of a popular romance, finished the work that Hesse had begun, and carried Montjuich at the double.

Colonel Parnell has done his best to dispel this story, and, as it seems to us, has failed. Hesse-Darmstadt was doubtless the soul of the attack, and deserves more credit than he is ever likely to receive. But his death left his chosen task but half performed, and nothing now can rob Peterborough of the glory of completing it.<sup>1</sup>

It is at this point that his trumpet-blowers would have us believe that the walls of Barcelona fell flat. But the walls of Barcelona did nothing

<sup>1</sup> It is worthy of notice that General Richards, the brave defender of Alicante, whose *Memorial of the Expedition to Barcelona* is among the Stowe MSS. in the British Museum, gives Peterborough due credit for this achievement. His approval is all the more noticeable because he withholds his admiration from everything else in the Earl's military conduct.

of the kind. Montjuich had been drawn into the perimeter of the defences for reasons identical with those which induced Nathaniel Fiennes, rather more than half a century before, to extend the fortifications of Bristol when he defended that town against Rupert. In both cases the city itself could be commanded by heavy ordnance on the western heights. Montjuich was in a sense the key to Barcelona, but only when the investing force brought up its siege-train. Now the expedition against Barcelona included no siege-train. The forces that Peterborough had at his disposal were foot-soldiers, not artillery; and therefore it appeared as if his own participation in the capture of Montjuich was better calculated to prove the attempt on Barcelona impracticable than his long protracted passive resistance.

But at this point the navy for the third time intervened with overwhelming effect. Under the inspired leadership of Shovell and Leake the seamen supplied every deficiency. They dismounted their naval guns, remounted them for land service, embarked them in boats, slung them up precipices, carried them over boulders and declivities, erected batteries, manned them themselves, laid the guns, and, in less time than it takes to tell, converted themselves into the most efficient siege-train that man ever improvised. Sir Clowdisley, boyish in his enthusiasm, reduced his ships' companies below the safety limit, and sent ashore two thousand five hundred seamen. These merry dogs enjoyed themselves as if the whole affair were a pleasure outing, and declared that gun-laying on the slopes of Montjuich was a treat compared with a rolling gun-deck in a two reef topsail gale. When all was ready, including the great battery, which consisted of

upwards of fifty large cannon *supplied from the ships and managed by the seamen*, Sir Clowdisley moved up all his bomb-vessels and eight of the line that could work inshore, and gave the signal for the most hideous bombardment to which any city in those days could be subjected.<sup>1</sup>

How the naval batteries did their work is well described in the pages that follow.<sup>2</sup> Fire was concentrated on one point, and after a fortnight's battering a practicable breach appeared. For a few hours it looked as if the final honours would go to the army ; but the city, being summoned,

<sup>1</sup> So fundamentally has Peterborough's reputation been based upon *Carleton's Memoirs*, so implicitly have others followed Earl Stanhope in ascribing to Peterborough the credit for Barcelona's downfall, that it will come to many as a surprise to find the book so much less partial a document than Earl Stanhope would have us believe. Referring to the capture of Montjuich, the unknown writer thus delivers himself :

'But after all, it must in justice be acknowledged that, notwithstanding this prodigious success that attended this bold enterprise, the land forces of themselves, without the assistance of the sailors, could never have reduced the town. The commanders and officers of the fleet had always evinced themselves favourers of this project upon Barcelona. . . . The Admirals forgot their element and acted as General Officers on land. They came every day from their ships with a body of men formed into companies and regularly marshalled and commanded by captains and lieutenants of their own. Captain Littleton, in particular, one of the most advanced captains in the whole fleet, offered of himself to take care of the landing and conveyance of the artillery to the camp. And answerable to that his first zeal, was his vigour all along ; for finding it next to an impossibility to draw the cannon and mortars up such vast precipices by horses (if the country had afforded them) he caused harness to be made for two hundred men ; and by that means, after a prodigious fatigue and labour, brought the cannons and mortars necessary for the siege (= bombardment) up to the very batteries.' (Scott's Edition, pp. 145-6.)

<sup>2</sup> See below, Vol. I, pp. 290-2.



professed itself ready to capitulate, and Barcelona, and with it the province of which it was the capital, passed into the hands of 'Charles III.'

The great news was carried home to England by representatives both of the army and the fleet. The joint emissaries explained in detail what had occurred, and Queen Anne conferred a knighthood on the naval captain, known henceforth as Sir John Norris. But this mark of recognition in itself was insufficient. And a nod is no better than a wink when the horse is blind. The Earl of Peterborough had been vested with supreme power, and now, when the hour was ripe, he exercised it to the full. Covering all his delinquencies under the train of his viceregal dignity, he claimed to have taken the town of Barcelona with his bare unaided hands. Not only did he make this his boast, but, with a cleverness which he always combined with his lack of scruple, he exacted from the general public a credence for what he claimed. After all, perhaps, there was not so very much cleverness required. A people, that to this day fondly suppose that General Wolfe with an army captured Quebec, were hardly likely in 1705 to discover from Sir Clowdisley Shovell's silence the part that the navy had played. The government, of course, were better informed; and when Peterborough seized this occasion to demand that he should be made sole Commander-in-Chief of all troops in Spain and sole Commander-in-Chief of the British fleet, it is to be feared that they did not take him seriously.

Where Peterborough was so markedly inferior not only to Wolfe, but to all British proconsuls who by their title or rank have lent a semblance of unity to what has proved a most intricate combined operation, was in his failure to work

harmoniously with his associates, both greater and less. He maddened the valorous Catalans by the gratuitous comment that they were not as brave as the Valencians. And in a brilliant series of epistles to his friends at home, he covered his working partners with ridicule. 'Charles III' and Prince Lichtenstein were always the 'Vienna Gang,' and Conyngham, his own second-in-command, was nailed to the rafter as an 'eternal screech-owl.' Such scintillant epigrams were too good to be suppressed, and, being returned by side-winds to the allied camp, caused the maximum of mischief.

The friction that his chafing cantankerous spirit created even in the smoothest of planes is well illustrated by what immediately followed upon the taking of Barcelona. 'Charles III' and his court were bent on establishing themselves in the city, and using the place as a base for any further undertakings. Peterborough's mind reverted at once to the march on Madrid from Valencia. He knew how utterly opposed the Austrians were to the project ; and it is reasonable to suppose that he knew how silly the project became, unless the Austrian party agreed to it. But he was quite unable to listen to what Prince Lichtenstein proposed, and equally unable to induce Prince Lichtenstein to accept his own alternative. So came about the most hideous error in the campaign : an error which Methuen, our ambassador at Lisbon, denounced in no measured terms. The allied forces were divided into two. The King retained a fraction to man the walls of Barcelona ; and Peterborough with the bulk went off by himself. Both parties to the cleavage must share the blame ; and it is small excuse for Charles and Lichtenstein that they

craved with no common yearning to see the Earl depart.

Little enough has been said so far of the part played by the auxiliaries. Cifuentes, the leader of the Catalan irregulars, had done all, and more than all, that had been expected of him. He had raised a force of three thousand men, cut Barcelona off from all chance of succour on the land side, and consolidated his services by the capture of vital outlying fortresses such as Gerona and Lerida. But his glory was eclipsed by the sudden effulgence of Basset-Y-Ramos at Denia. This leader, reliant on himself alone, and with no British fleet at hand to lend him moral support, first stirred up his neighbours to a sense of their fealty to 'Charles III,' and then conceived and executed the audacious scheme of seizing the city of Valencia itself. Town after town followed the example of the capital, and very soon the whole province hoisted Austrian colours, with the single exception of the port of Alicante. The French forces in Aragon took alarm, and Las Torres (in the Bourbon interest) was hastened off to undo what Ramos had done.

It is unnecessary to repeat that Peterborough had no perception whatever of the possibilities of sea-power. Had he possessed any such perception, he could not have failed to convey himself to his new base, Valencia, by sea. That he did not do so is common knowledge. What is not generally understood is the influence exerted on his mind by the exploits of these two captains of irregulars. He envied the speed with which they moved, the unexpected nature of the blows they inflicted, their complete immunity from punishment. Warfare as they waged it was warfare after his own heart; and in mad mood he resolved to make



one of them. Las Torres had moved against a speck of a place called San Mateo. The garrison of Tortosa, which held the passage of the Ebro, attempted a rescue: and Peterborough hurried to join in the scamper and put himself at their head. That Queen Anne's vicegerent, England's accredited representative, should suddenly turn captain of guerilleros seems fantastic enough: but such caprice was quite characteristic of one who in London neglected Privy Council business to carry home his poultry and cabbages. The pose will appear different to different onlookers. Lovers of sensation will not fail to be snared in the meshes of what will seem to them an irresistible romance; serious students of war will be outraged by what they will describe as insufferable stupidity.

Caring for nobody, Peterborough took to the road, and, as he swashbuckled through eastern Spain, the opposing forces (nothing considerable) simply melted away. The stories told of this period in Carleton's *Memoirs*, though they reflect little honour on Peterborough's magnanimity, may very well be true. It was a favourite boast of his that before he came of age he had thrice committed a capital crime. And the only person more foolish than the person who believes the story is the person who refuses to believe it. The point is not that Peterborough made a Spanish army run away by supplying them through spies with false information, and supporting it by a theatrical array of armed men seen at a distance on a hill-top; but rather that such practical jokes (however delightful) were wholly and totally irrelevant. To describe them in detail is to repeat the Earl's offence, and distract the attention of his own side from the critical issues of the campaign. Suffice it to say,

then, that after a round of picaresque adventures, which are more reminiscent of Gil Blas than of Cyrano de Bergerac, he arrived with a whole skin and rather sullied panache at Valencia, a city which (in Carleton's phrase) 'would make a Jew forget Jerusalem.' And here he spent some of the most critical months of the war in a manner hardly calculated to advance the cause of the Grand Alliance: or, to quote the words of his most impassioned eulogist,<sup>1</sup> in 'reading *Don Quixote*, giving balls and suppers, trying in vain to get some good sport out of the Valencia bulls, and making love, not in vain, to the Valencian women.'

To return then from intrigues with priests and assignations with ladies to the main course of the war. The establishment of the Austrian court at Barcelona, and its desertion by Peterborough, had the effect (as already shown<sup>2</sup>) of putting the King in check. The Bourbon forces were not above learning from their adversaries, and attempted to end the Peninsular war at a blow by a smart piece of combined work. An army, big enough to behave like a steam-roller, swept all resistance out of its path and approached Barcelona by land; and a fleet of 28 of the line and 184 transports moved round from Toulon and occupied the roadstead. In a military sense the army was *en l'air*, as it had no land communications; and the function of the ships was not to shadow the English navy (which for the time being had disappeared), but to act as substitute for the land communications which the army had saved time by dispensing with. In February 1706 Barcelona (with 1400 regulars) was surrounded

<sup>1</sup> See below, p. cxxi.    <sup>2</sup> See above, pp. xxxvii-xxxviii.

by an investing force of 12,000 men, and this figure by April had doubled itself. The event of the siege was a foregone conclusion, and Bourbon Philip (as already narrated) came in person to witness his rival's discomfiture. Very bitterly the Austrian court mourned for the 5500 troops which Peterborough had carried off with him. As for 'Charles III,' beside his brave heart, he found solace only in the Count of Cifuentes. That indefatigable party, having raised his forces to 8000 men, subjected the mighty investing host to every imaginable embarrassment; and, when he came within an ace of capturing Bourbon Philip himself, that royal scion thought it advisable to sleep on board the ships. Montjuich, of course, was quickly taken; but that did not involve the immediate capture of the town any more than in the previous year. The 'King,' in a manner that cannot be too highly commended, inspired all the citizens with his own courage, and, while Heaven permitted, and there was still time, sent forth urgent pleas for help.

Before Sir Clowdisley Shovell returned with the bulk of the Grand Fleet to England, before the Earl of Peterborough embarked upon his eccentric soldiering in eastern Spain, the two joint Admirals had appointed a winter squadron for the security of Barcelona. The choice of Leake to command this detachment was doubtless dictated by the care he had taken of Gibraltar in the previous autumn. Certainly, the conditions of the previous autumn were quick to reproduce themselves. Leake found himself in charge of a mixed squadron, part English, part Dutch, which was already at the end of its resources, and could do nothing further without resort to a dockyard. The nearest base, as before, was Lisbon; and



Lisbon, instead of being 360 miles, was now a thousand miles away. Sir John set out at once, and encountered the most terrible weather. Storm succeeded storm ; and the winds abated only to lash themselves into wilder tumults. Great seas came aboard, and as if in wanton mischief smashed the boats to pieces and washed away the fragments. The Dutchmen drifted in a body to leeward, and sometimes for days together were hull down behind the horizon. Sails were torn to shreds, and new canvas was brought forth till not a spare bolt remained. Month after month went by, and the ships' companies grew sick and died like flies. The supply of bread was reduced to two pounds per man per week, and, finally, to a single biscuit per day. Gibraltar, which was touched *en route*, could give no assistance ; in fact, was disappointed to receive nothing from the ships. The mortality from starvation grew horrifying ; and when, at last, after a passage of thirteen weeks, the first of the squadron reached Lisbon, it was only to find the Portuguese as improvident as ever and their storehouses as empty as a beggar's bowl. There was nothing for it but to begin at the beginning ; to purchase rope and canvas where they could be procured ; and, while the ships were on the careen, to cut and shape new sails. The Portuguese looked on with lazy indifference, except in so far as their own pockets were concerned. One example of their knavery will suffice to show what Sir John was compelled to endure.

As in the previous year, there was a squadron at Cadiz to engage his attention. But this time, instead of battleships, it comprised a rich flota of galleons lading for the New World. Leake was determined to capture them, and to make sure

of his prey, invited the King of Portugal to lay an embargo on all shipping in the Tagus, so that no hint of his intentions might get abroad. His request was formally and outwardly complied with; but, to Sir John's annoyance, did not prevent certain ships wearing Danish colours from putting to sea. Meanwhile his own preparations were hampered at every turn by the Dutch, whose dilatoriness seemed to have some sinister motive behind it. At last Sir John, learning that the flota was on the point of departure, gave the word to weigh and moved from his anchorage. As he did so, the river defences opened fire; and, under cover of his own request for an embargo, the Portuguese closed their door and held him prisoner. Before Sir John could get this misunderstanding cleared up, the flota of course managed to make good its escape; and Sir John was not altogether surprised to learn that it had been enabled to do so by the deliberate scheming of his Dutch and Portuguese friends, who had commercial interests at stake in the enemy's undertaking.

Thus thwarted, and impeded by his own side, he proceeded upon his way towards Barcelona; and, in his passage, received the urgent and agonising appeal of 'the King.' The message naturally lent wings to his feet; but the task before him was complicated by two very serious entanglements. In the first place he learnt from his scouts that the city was invested on the water side by the Count of Toulouse (Rooke's antagonist at Malaga) with a fleet that in numbers outmatched his own. He did not know (any more than the Duke of Marlborough) that Marshal Tessé and the enemy's army were, in the absence of land-communications, relying upon sea-borne supplies.

He naturally supposed that Toulouse's fleet occupied the station that strategy dictated, and was prepared to try conclusions with a relieving force. He therefore decided that, in order to break through to the town's assistance, it would be necessary to raise his own force at least to an equality with the French ; and, having received notice from home that reinforcements would join him without delay, he exercised his skill in discovering them, putting himself in touch with them, and effecting a timely junction. There was in all this a neatness of management, a dexterous opportuneness, which the old Roman generals would have called 'felicity.'

So much for the first entanglement. The second was more disconcerting. It amounted to nothing less than a summons (more than once repeated) from the Earl of Peterborough, instructing the Mediterranean fleet to join him immediately, and on no account to go near Barcelona before this, his peremptory mandate, had been obeyed. Leake did not forget that the joint commission made Peterborough his superior officer. He did not forget the penalties attaching to direct disobedience. He did not forget what a dangerous and implacable enemy the Earl could be to those who dared to cross his path. But these, after all, were personal considerations ; and in a crisis personal considerations must be put aside. He remembered that his first duty was to Barcelona ; and that, if Barcelona fell, the allied cause would suffer a graver set-back than any that had yet befallen. Once more he unlocked his 'Instructions' and glanced through them to refresh his memory. They were signed 'Peterborow,' and 'Clowd. Shovell' ; and, in their final sentence, commended Barcelona to his loving care. Leake



turned and read them through from the beginning ; and at length came to a paragraph, which we may well attribute to Sir Clowdisley's drafting, and which we may well believe that the Earl would have deleted if he had not at the time been immersed in self affairs. ' If the Earl of Peterborough shall advise you that it is necessary for a part, or your whole squadron, to come &c., &c., you are to comply with his Lordship's directions, *if it shall be thought advisable by a council of war.*'<sup>1</sup> Sir John, as already remarked, was at his best when handling a council of war, because he regarded it, not as a seed-plot of inspirations, but a granary in which to shelter his full-grown decrees. He summoned his advisers, put before them all the information which he himself possessed, and then in simple words showed that their king was in check ; that one false move might enable their opponents to mate ; and that Peterborough, however many squares he might have traversed, was after all nothing more than a pawn.

*Resolved* : that, without the loss of a moment, the king must be rescued ; and that the over-venturous filibustering pawn, in the interests of the game, must be sacrificed.

Now let us turn from the chivalrous knight impetuously overleaping every obstacle in his determined effort to get the king out of check, and examine the state of the board from the pawn's point of view.

When Peterborough learned the news that sent the fleet on its way with all sails set, he quickly decided that it would be impossible for him to relieve Barcelona by land. The decision was well grounded and incontestably wise. He

<sup>1</sup> See below, vol. i, p. 298.

had withdrawn from the town 5500 regulars who would have been invaluable within the city walls ; but, as 'Charles III' was now hemmed in by over 20,000 men, it would have been madness to attempt to hack a way through the cordon of iron that was strangling him. Peterborough, therefore, made no effort to concentrate the forces which he had scattered through the province of Valencia. Instead, he sent the King the best counsel he could offer, and advised him to escape from Barcelona in a boat.

Those who decry this recommendation on grounds of pusillanimity and military etiquette overlook the ever elusive fact that Peterborough was primarily a statesman. On political grounds it would have been just as good sense for Charles to escape from Barcelona in a boat as for M. Gambetta to escape from Paris in a balloon. The main object of the French in besieging Barcelona was to capture the crowned candidate of the Grand Alliance. If they captured Barcelona, but missed the person of the 'King,' they would score a success of unquestioned magnitude : but they would not bring the war to a victorious close. After his defeat at Waterloo, Napoleon resolved to escape from the port of Rochefort in the manner advocated by Peterborough. He was deterred from doing so, not by the pusillanimity of the proceeding, nor by its conflict with military etiquette ; but simply by the vigilance of H.M.S. *Bellerophon*. Peterborough's advice, however repugnant to Charles, seems wise or foolish in calculable ratio to the wakefulness of Toulouse's fleet : and that is a factor of which we know very little.

Whatever Peterborough's critics may say on this head, he must be absolved in the most plenary

way of all flippancy or want of kind feeling. His counsel was offered in sincere good faith: for the very excellent reason that he himself was in a similar fix. The 'King's' predicament was his own predicament. When the 'King's' forces laid down their arms, his own forces must follow suit. In short, unless assistance were very shortly forthcoming, he himself must escape in a boat. He pointed out for the guidance of the 'King' a course to which he realised that he himself might be reduced. 'A fellow feeling makes us wondrous kind.'

But first to exercise his prerogative as Commander-in-Chief of the British naval forces! Toulouse's fleet stood between Barcelona and salvation: but there was nothing to prevent the small winter squadron to which he had entrusted the safety of the town from effecting his rescue in the nick of time. He forthwith ordered Leake to come to him immediately, and, sagely anticipating events, imperiously instructed him to ignore all messages except his own.<sup>1</sup> Such summons he repeated, and repeated in vain. 'There was no voice, nor any that answered.' At once his mind reverted to the idea of a boat; of many boats in which to save himself and his troops. He marched to the waterside, astutely placing himself sufficiently far from Barcelona to be out of harm's way, sufficiently near to the threatened spot to make sure of intercepting Leake.

<sup>1</sup> On the strength of Brit. Mus. Addit. MSS. 28057 f. 94b, Sir John Laughton has given it as his opinion that Peterborough's orders to Leake were part of a deep-laid plot to ruin Charles, and so substitute the Duke of Savoy as British candidate for the throne of Spain. The surmise is ingenious, and not out of keeping with the Peterborough's peculiarities: but it ignores the extent of the peril to which the Earl himself was at the moment exposed.



He reached the seashore at Sitges ; and, as the ocean breezes fanned his brow and assured him that the ships of England would soon heave in sight, his mental agility returned in the full flush of tide, and he decided to exercise the powers with which his country had endowed him, and, hoisting his flag in the approaching fleet, relieve Barcelona himself.

In respect of what follows we find ourselves encompassed by a crowd of disputatious commentators. Of these, the most ludicrous are Leake's supporters. Cutting themselves with the knives of anger and the lancets of unreasoning fury, they only obscure the truth with their frenzied gestures, and must be unceremoniously bundled out of court. Peterborough's advocates, though noisy, never lose their heads, and deserve a patient hearing. They may be classified under two heads : (a) those familiar with naval custom and usage ; (b) those unfamiliar, or comparatively so.

(a) From the author of *Carleton's Memoirs* to the present day there have been those who tell us that, when Peterborough waylaid Leake's fleet off Sitges, he proceeded on board an ordinary ship and there hoisted his flag. If the truth of this assertion could be firmly established, it is only fair to Peterborough to say that his conduct, although selfish, was perfectly regular, and that from the moment his flag was broken at the masthead, it was himself and not Leake that controlled the whole fleet.

When, however, the various specific statements are gathered together and collated, it is found that they are not in strict agreement. Some authorities give to the Leopard the honour of having hoisted Peterborough's flag ; others transfer

both honour and flag on board of the Somerset. Happily the matter has been laid for ever at rest by recent research. Sir John Laughton, fastening upon the discrepancy with remorseless downrightness, has hunted up and laid bare the logs of both ships, found them exceptionally full, and proved conclusively that Peterborough never came on board either one ship or the other. As a matter of fact, it is doing rather less than justice to the character and antecedents of the Earl to suggest that he bothered himself with lesser craft. It was to the Prince George, Leake's flagship, that he betook himself, as all the credible documents asseverate.

(b) Those of the Earl's apologists, who discern clearly enough his glaring lack of chivalry, condone his offence by arguing that it was quite consonant with naval usage for an Admiral to hoist his flag on board whatsoever ship he chose. But such was not the case. Naval commanders-in-chief (in those days as in these) often enough selected a Flag Officer as First Captain, or Chief of Staff, so that there might be two Admirals under a single flag. But, with every ordinary vessel at liberty, to go on board a ship already bearing a flag, with the intention of converting her into a flagship, was an unheard-of, unexampled, unprecedented thing.<sup>1</sup> This is well brought out by Mr. Stebbing,<sup>2</sup> the most fair-minded and (in consequence) most convincing of all Peterborough's biographers, who interprets the Earl's high-handed proceeding as a vote of censure on Sir John Leake.

<sup>1</sup> And this was no doubt the reason why Carleton and his too credulous imitators palmed off the myth about the Leopard and Somerset, so as to give their story in naval circles the appearance of *ben trovato*.

<sup>2</sup> *Peterborough*, p. 100.

Was it intended as a vote of censure? Even if there were no other explanation, it would be very difficult indeed to accept this. For we must remember that it was six solid months since Peterborough had parted company with the fleet, and his ignorance of what it had been doing in the meanwhile must have been almost as abysmal as that which distinguishes his multitudinous hero-worshippers. How could he possibly venture to pass judgment upon six months' work at sea with no ascertainable qualification beyond six months' residence on land? Besides, such conduct as Peterborough's on this occasion, even if intended (in a parliamentary sense) as an adverse vote, would not have been so understood by seamen. To come aboard with a superior flag rather betokened a visit of honour such as that of George III to Lord Howe in the Queen Charlotte after the Glorious First of June.

Why then did Peterborough convey himself on board Leake's flagship when there were half a hundred other vessels to choose from? The question may be met by another. Does practice count for anything in the mastery of instruments like the violin and the piano? If so, does not practice also count in the manipulation of that more tremendous instrument, a fleet of battle-ships? Is an Admiral's value in inverse ratio to the amount of gold lace he wears, or is it not? Is the command of a fleet the recognition of experience, or is it a mere concession to grey hairs? In short, could a naval officer who retired with the rank of midshipman rejoin the service after a quarter of a century and take on an admiral's task at five minutes' notice in the most critical moment of a great maritime operation? These questions may carry a rhetorical flavour;



but though an answer is hardly wanted, let the greatest figure of Queen Anne's reign be called from the shades to closure them. 'The sea service,' said the Duke of Marlborough, 'is not so easily managed as that of land. There are many more precautions to take, and you and I are not capable of judging them.'

Here, then, was Barcelona at its very last gasp; and here was the fleet of England, after six months of struggle, within a few hours of bringing the city relief. Here was Sir John Leake at the summit of his single-minded career; and here was the Earl of Peterborough, fresh from his essays with Valencian bulls and his assignations with Valencian ladies, but with no experience of sea affairs other than what he imbibed twenty-five years before when he retired with the rank of midshipman. Had Peterborough gone on board an ordinary ship and there hoisted his flag, the whole fleet would have looked to him direct for guidance, and he would have been obliged, as Marlborough's dictum reminds us, to take precautions which he was not so much as capable of judging. No. He went on board the flagship, because there was the mind that had conceived the relief, the brain that would bring it to fruition. Peterborough knew better than anyone his own limitations. He had not the slightest desire to interfere with the progress of things. He only intended to snatch the laurels from the brow of Leake and place them on his own. His whole career had been one of splendid insolence, and he had played his part with reckless magnificence not unmingled with a dash of buffoonery. But the carriage of his flag on board the Prince George eclipses his offer to oust Admiral the Earl of Torrington in 1690. It is the crowning, cul-

minating episode in the story of 'Brazenhead the Great.'

Lovers of the picturesque will probably continue to extend to him forgiveness of the kind that is so readily forthcoming for Beau Brocade and Claude Duval, footpads with less effrontery than Peterborough and none of his blue blood. And lovers of the picturesque will not expend their sentiment upon an object altogether unworthy; for although from the wording of his joint commission Peterborough hoped to enjoy an immunity analogous to that which the highwaymen derived from the weaponless unpreparedness of the coach they assailed, yet the risk was there, and the risk was considerable. How great it was may be gauged from the testimony of Paul Methuen, son of the ambassador at Lisbon, who tells us that a single spirit animated the whole fleet, and that from flag-officer to powder-monkey there was never a man whose arms did not ache to seize the body of the Earl of Peterborough and fling it into the sea. But the sense of discipline prevailed over the impulse to mutiny, and Sir John was left to deal with the situation in the manner he considered the best. If his anger had flamed like Raleigh's, when in 1597 the capricious Earl of Essex wantonly affronted him off the island of Fayal, there would have been reason enough and to spare. Leake might excusably have gone further, and, fitting a running tackle round the intruder's waist, have shifted him from the quarter-deck of the *Prince George*, as Drake, in 1577, shifted Master Thomas Doughty from the *Swan* to the *Christopher*. But such a method of protest was not the method of Sir John. Now, as always, he stoutly refused to allow anything to come between him and the

achievement of the object which he had in view. A quarrel with Peterborough might jeopardise the chances of relieving Barcelona; and the relief of Barcelona was for the time being his preoccupation, his obsession, the goal of his hopes, the burden of his prayers. In silence he allowed Peterborough to come aboard; in silence he suffered the Earl's flag to be hoisted.

But he did not, as historians one and all have supposed, by his gentle meekness abdicate the throne. Not his the nature of Richard II, to cringe before his supplanter and, calling for a mirror, take his last look at fallen greatness. The scene enacted on the quarter-deck of the Prince George was dramatic in intensive feeling; but its significance has escaped attention hitherto, because maritime heraldry is an occult science that makes no appeal to the multitude.

Leake's mode of retaliation was something which every man in the fleet could see, and, seeing, understand and approve. According to immemorial custom, the greater flag supplanted the less; and, when the greater was hoisted, the lesser came down. This was a rule without an exception. It stood unchanged as the stars in their courses. But Leake, though he left the body of Peterborough untouched, flung this more precious precedent overboard. He suffered indeed the flag of Peterborough to be exalted, but he would not permit his own to be abased. The Prince George proceeded on her way, unique in her armorial bearings. For the symbol of monarchy was duplicated, as in Westminster Abbey when William and Mary were crowned. At one masthead flew the banner of the Admiral who had carried relief to Londonderry, who twice in the teeth of every obstacle had carried relief to



Gibraltar, who had laboured a thousand miles and back for the means to relieve Barcelona ; the altruist who refused a knighthood, spurned an earldom, and preferred to risk oblivion—nay, obliteration—rather than fail the city that had put its trust in him. And at another masthead flew the banner of the intriguing statesman who was cheerfully prepared at a moment's notice to take the place of a Bishop, a Chancellor, a King, a Field-Marshal or Lord High Admiral ; the egoist who to nine talents had added an incomparable tenth—the knack of declining, in hell's despite, any seat but the loftiest available.

While Peterborough had been plotting to reap where he had not sown, Leake had been planning how best to deal with the fleet opposed to him. He still cherished hopes that Toulouse meant to fight ; he still dreamed of a sea victory which should make Marbella and Malaga seem but very little things. But although he endeavoured to screen his approach as effectively as possible, he knew well enough that military tidings percolate through indistinguishable crevices ; and he did not disguise from himself that the French might prematurely ascertain his proximity and modify their own dispositions to the extent of raising the blockade. Under the circumstances, therefore, he formed a flying squadron of fast two-deckers, and made this over to George Byng, instructing him to round up the French and hang on to their skirts until he himself could arrive and give them the *coup de grâce*. Unhappily Toulouse, in good time for himself, learned all that he wanted to know, and, having no desire to be treated like a devotee of Juggernaut, made off with all the precipitancy and zeal that von

Scheer displayed at Jutland. The battle Leake longed for was thus frustrated ; but his advance squadron, thus set at liberty, had the satisfaction of bringing relief to Barcelona before Peterborough so much as entered the bay.

The wild stampede of Toulouse's fleet had the effect of severing, at a single blow, the life-line that sustained the French army ashore. And if Peterborough had possessed one tithe of the generalship with which his admirers have invested him, he would have been off like a sleuth-hound on the heels of de Tessé, who with fifteen thousand warriors fled in fearful panic to the Pyrenean passes. But for the vainglorious Earl the streets of Barcelona formed a little heaven of his own creation. While the ground reverberated with the tramp of departing legions, he took his stand upon a balcony, and, after explaining in gracefully-phrased Castilian how he had been able to save Barcelona from its fate, he snuffed up the incense from ten thousand worshippers and then scattered a largesse of silver and gold with the regal pomp of a caliph in Bagdad.

Truly the hour was a triumphant one ; and even if de Tessé was allowed to escape, he had lost during the siege some six thousand men, and he had abandoned his baggage, his camp, his supplies, and one hundred and twenty-nine guns. All this, apart from the salvation of the city, constituted a victory in every way worthy to compare with Ramillies. In such a light it was regarded at home, and services of thanksgiving were universal. In a sermon at St. Paul's the preacher compared my Lord Peterborough to Joshua and Gideon ; and the Queen, who listened with rapt attention, made haste to give the Earl a rich coach of state, ten thousand ounces

of silver plate, and twenty thousand pounds in gold.

And here it may be remarked that a man who escapes alone from a burning hotel to an adjoining roof, which is momentarily safe, but which will certainly be consumed unless the fire is extinguished—the man who in such a situation bawls for a fire-escape, and in an agony of apprehension taps the telephone wires and peremptorily orders the brigade to rescue him before it goes to the hotel, will in the eyes of any self-respecting community cut a lamentable figure. Yet such clamorous and indecent self-assertion was all that Peterborough contributed to the relief of Barcelona in 1706.<sup>1</sup>

So slender indeed was his claim to national gratitude that, from the first he recognised that his apotheosis needed adequate endorsement. In supplying this, his natural bent for intrigue—the Machiavellian lack of scruple which in the past had disquieted such confirmed old wire-pullers as Orford and Shrewsbury—now stood him in excellent stead. He did not rest content with mere assertion ; he did not labour the point that it was himself, and none other, that had saved the beleaguered city. He brought against Leake a charge of having maliciously hindered him in the performance of a sacred duty. This charge he supported by two specific heads of indictment : firstly, he maintained that his relief of Barcelona

<sup>1</sup> If there was one person better qualified than other men to decide who relieved Barcelona, it was Charles of Austria, who by the capture of the city stood to lose all that the world held in store for him. In this connexion his grateful letters to Leake should be read, especially those of February 5, 1708, June 20, 1708, and July 30, 1708 ; see below, vol. ii, pp. 199, 235, 253.



had been perilously jeopardised by Leake's wilful dilatoriness ; secondly, he accused the unhappy Admiral of criminal negligence in allowing Toulouse to escape.

Such an accusation can only be described as demoniacally clever. In fact, it was really more than half established in the mere act of bringing it forward : for it appealed to the least desirable propensity of the English race—their love of a scandal involving highly-placed officials. The heads of the indictment are still canvassed and discussed after a lapse of two hundred years ; and still distract attention (as Peterborough hoped) from the naked truth that would have shamed him. They, therefore, demand at this point a brief investigation.

*First Indictment.*—If it were stated that the First Light Cruiser Squadron was for more than a month, in the first half of 1918, prevented by unfavourable weather from rounding the Scaw and entering the Cattegat, not one landsman in a thousand would think himself entitled to question or pass judgment on such a delay. Yet, because the epoch of sails is past, and much of its very terminology is dead, modern biographers of Peterborough, both military and civilian, have accepted his lightly cast aspersion ; and, after tabulating a few dates and juggling with a few changes of wind, have ascribed to Sir John Leake a 'lethargic humour,' an 'unaccountable laziness,' 'a tendency to loiter,' which would, they say, probably have been more pronounced but for his 'superior's' sharply administered 'stimulus.' Such deleterious vapourings are not easily dissipated, even by the solid and substantial contradiction of fifty consentient log-books. For their appeal is not to justice, but to the baser part in man. They are

like a well-timed grimace in a law court—very telling perhaps with the jury, but not so much an argument as an impertinence.

If Leake had failed to arrive in time, and Barcelona had fallen, a very good case could be made out in his defence: the thousand miles of sea-room that separated him from his base; the treacherous machinations of Dutch and Portuguese; the dependence of his ships on weather conditions which he was powerless to control; and above all, before all, and over all, the distracting counter-orders of the Earl of Peterborough. If Leake had failed to arrive in time, and Barcelona had fallen, much could be said to explain his misfortune and extenuate his mischance. But the whole point of the story lies in the fact that Leake, so far from failing, arrived in the very nick, and saved Barcelona as before he had saved Gibraltar and hard-pressed Londonderry. Pierced by the thrust of such an achievement, the charge of dilatoriness crashes to the earth like a broken aeroplane. The almost uncanny manner in which Sir John opportunely made his appearance, and with unflustered calm anticipated the stroke of doom, was the constant theme of unprejudiced contemporaries both in England and abroad. Abel Boyer, the indefatigable compiler of monumental records on which to-day the dust lies undisturbed, paused in his herculean task to liken the Admiral's advents to the blessed interventions of Providence. And little Father Cienfugos, who may not have known much about English politics nor very much more about Peninsular campaigning, but who was accustomed to look into the hearts of men and voice what was hidden there, wrote to Sir John that he looked forward to meeting 'one who is so much accustomed to arrive in time.'

*Second Indictment.*—Peterborough's supplementary accusation, if taken seriously, will appear more difficult to rebut than the first. But it ought never, of course, to be taken seriously. So carelessly is it aimed that it slips as it goes and wounds the hand that aims it. For if Barcelona (as all are agreed) was relieved by a fleet of ships; and if the Admiral commanding that fleet of ships allowed the Frenchmen to escape, then Peterborough, as self-styled saviour of the city, was guilty of the very crime which he condemned. The indictment, in fact, can only be sustained by admitting that it was Leake who relieved Barcelona; and the only reason for framing the indictment was to prove the contrary, which, as Euclid says, is absurd.

Quibbles apart, it is worth examining the matter, because, out of every bucketful thrown, there is always a handful of mud that sticks. Was Leake, then, in any way to blame because the French fleet evaded capture? Accusations similar to that brought against him have been hurled at many another admiral both before and since. Such charges originate in a natural feeling of disappointment which can be traced to a false analogy drawn from warfare on land. In such a campaign as Blenheim, for example, we have the fruit of the most perfect strategy; and the fruit was none other than the salvation of Vienna which the legions of Louis menaced. But the world cares little for such a consummation, and counts up the dead and wounded, seventeen thousand in number, and the eleven thousand prisoners. Now these, including Marshal Tallard and his coach, were mere *casualties*—accidents, that is to say, of time and place. For great strategic operations conducted ashore must be moulded by



earthly obstacles ; and the utter impossibility of conveying over the earth's surface vast numbers of men beyond a certain speed makes the majesty of victory and the tragedy of defeat. The armies that surrendered at Poitiers and Sedan would not have surrendered if they had been able to escape : and their failure to escape must be attributed to the victor's skill in coaxing Mother Earth to act as his ally. There is nothing that can be counted upon in maritime warfare analogous to this partnership. Either the sea is flat enough to fight upon, or it is not. If it is not, then opposing navies keep in port : if it is, then there is a dead level of endless fighting surface uninterrupted by inequalities. The old adage that it is cheaper to bring corn to London from Australia by sea than from Canterbury by land is another illustration of the tolls that earth's surface may exact. There are no paths on the surface of ocean, because the whole surface of ocean is a single path. And from this it follows that the most perfect strategic dispositions at sea need not necessarily eventuate in carnage. The skill of one player, as in a game of chess, may conclude the match without the taking of capital pieces. It might, indeed, happen that a naval commander would rightly incur blame for the enemy's escape, as in the battles off Genoa and Hyères in 1795. But each case deserves to be judged upon its merits. When Marlborough saved Vienna in 1704 there was no earthly chance for Tallard to withdraw his host ; when Leake saved Barcelona in 1706 there were still ten-sixteenths of the visible horizon that offered Toulouse an escape.

Escape ! But surely there was *no* escape. Toulouse was like one who, to assist his friends, hangs suspended over a precipice with one hand

grasping a rope. His friends on terra firma sustain the weight, but they cannot achieve their object without his help. The prize is certain if his grip will hold ; but should he let go, then all is lost. Before the perfection of Leake's strategy, Toulouse let go his hold ; and the French plans, that had drawn to a single point all the hopes of their Spanish campaigning, fell with a noise that reverberated through Europe into the pit of eternal perdition.

If by the escape of the hostile fleet, the naval strategist necessarily incurs a stigma, then Nelson surely was much to blame for botching things in the first half of 1805. For Villeneuve was out, and remained out ; crossed the Atlantic and back again ; and Nelson laboured in pursuit of him, and laboured all in vain. Happily for his country, happily for himself, Nelson was his own interpreter ; and the blood that coursed through his own little veins throbbed back to the great heart of England. Leake had no skill to explain his skill, no desire to betray what he felt. With an infinite capacity for taking pains, he laboured silently towards his goal ; and, when another filched his credit and besmirched his name, he opened not his mouth.

With the relief of Barcelona (May 11, 1706) the initiative passed to the allies, and a council was called to consider fresh plans. Peterborough, untutored by experience, immediately revived the idea of a raid upon Madrid from Valencia, and seems to have succeeded in convincing the 'King' that the hour was now ripe. Charles consented to make the experiment as soon as ever the Earl could assure him that there was sufficient transport to make the project feasible. Peterborough, accordingly, set out for Valencia, condescending

on this occasion to travel by sea ; and early in June he reached his destination. He transferred from Barcelona some four thousand men, which, with those in garrison at Denia and elsewhere, gave him control of some eight thousand in all. His friends are careful to remind us that, at his coming, the city reawakened to the joyousness of life. Never a day passed without a bull-fight—never a night without a state ball. The Earl gave the word gaiety a new meaning, and magnificence awaited on his train. He kept no accounts, however ; was before very long in financial straits ; and to the ‘King’s’ inquiries returned answer that transport sufficient for a large army was simply not to be had. Thus dismissing the matter, he turned with renewed relish to the seductive pleasures of the orange-groves.

However unwise, however chimerical, may have been the idea of an advance from the coast to the capital, the concentration of the French forces in Catalonia, and the debacle which engulfed them at Leake’s approach, marked the hour for the attempt if the attempt was to be made. And even as Peterborough disembarked at Valencia and summoned around him his toreadors, the Grand Alliance compassed, through other hands than his, the greatest military success that the war in Spain had produced.

Henry de Ruvigny, Earl of Galway, survives for most Englishmen in Macaulay’s unfair anti-thesis as ‘a man who was in war what Molière’s doctors were in medicine, who thought it more honourable to fail according to rule than to succeed by innovation.’ Born in 1648, of Huguenot extraction, he had already made his mark as a disciple of Turenne and as a soldier of experience when the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes



drove him from his native land. Having the acquaintance of Marlborough, he emigrated to England, and under William III played a distinguished part both in Ireland and in Flanders. He won the chief honours at Aghrim, and at Landen covered the retreat of the allies. When William's war ended he was, for meritorious services, raised to the Peerage ; and was selected to command the English forces in the Peninsula when Portugal joined the Grand Alliance in 1703. A man of bigoted Protestant views, he was called upon to command an army largely made up of Roman Catholics ; and in execution of his trust evoked from so good a judge as Marlborough a fine expression of admiring eulogy.

It has been seen how quick he was in 1704 to detect the withdrawal of the French armies from the boundary of Portugal, and how opportune was his dispatch of the troops from home to reinforce the garrison of Gibraltar. In the following year, profiting by the absorption of his enemies in the siege, he resolved to turn the tables upon them and advance from Lisbon upon Madrid. The direct route up the Tagus valley being impracticable, he moved by the southern road, which at the boundary is commanded by the fortress of Badajoz. Here he was repulsed ; and, suffering the loss of an arm, was obliged for a while to abandon his attempt. But neither age, nor infirmity, nor wounds could withhold him ; and, when in 1706 the fall of Barcelona again served to distract the French attention, he selected a fresh route and again pushed boldly towards the Spanish capital. Each day he had to be lifted into the saddle : but on April 14 he took Alcantara with four thousand men. On May 26 he drove the enemy out of the strong fortress of Ciudad

Rodrigo, and on June 7 he captured Salamanca. The French Court fled while still there was time ; and on June 27 Galway entered Madrid and in triumph proclaimed Charles of Austria as King. In a month or two he had driven before him no less a soldier than the Duke of Berwick from the Guadiana to the Manzanares. He had robbed his proud adversary of eight thousand troops and one hundred pieces of cannon. With a motley array of Dutch and Portuguese and a stiffening of Englishmen he had pierced through the stoutest of the French defences ; he had overcome difficulties of ground and of temper sufficient to ruin a dozen campaigns ; and now he found himself in Madrid—Madrid the bourne of Peterborough's hopes, Madrid the goal of military aspiration.

Instead, however, of piercing the heart of Spain, he found that he had only placed himself in a death-trap. He had lost touch with the sea ; and the high-water mark of his great success spelled in Castile and Leon the turn of the tide. The guerilleros hovered around him like kites : every feature of the landscape concealed a foe pledged to the Bourbon cause. Every hour that passed accentuated his weakness and brought to Berwick accessions of strength. To cover the capital, he moved to the north-east, and dug himself in at Guadalaxara. Then as he realised that his communications with his Portuguese base were severed, he flung out tentacles in the opposite direction, and made contact with Peterborough and Charles.

A fresh crisis had arisen with startling suddenness ; and this time the navy was powerless to help. Count Noyelles, who had succeeded Hesse-Darmstadt in command of the troops at Barcelona,

forced a route through unfriendly Aragon, and on August 6, with the King in company, joined Galway with three thousand men. Peterborough, who had received an earlier call, and employed the route whose advantages he had so loudly advertised, reached the camp not so much as an hour before the King with no more than four hundred dragoons.

A council of high import was forthwith held at Guadalaxara, and in the presence of the assembly of notabilities Peterborough put forward two demands : firstly, that all the allied forces throughout the Peninsula should be combined under a single generalissimo ; and secondly, that that generalissimo should be himself. Whatever may be thought of the second demand, the first was based on an instinct of statesmanship fundamentally sound. There were representatives of five nations present, and the first essential was that all should pull together. In this sense Galway received the proposal. He had achieved the greatest military success in the Spanish theatre of the war, and was prepared to give an even finer display of leadership. With the chivalry of an Outram, he offered to lay aside his rôle of commander-in-chief and serve under the Earl of Peterborough. But das Minas, the Portuguese commander-in-chief, would not for a minute listen to the proposal, and the Dutch representative was similarly minded. Peterborough, therefore, shook upon them the dust from off his feet ; and, leaving Guadalaxara with a handful of men, galloped back through the vineyards to the province he had left, incidentally losing all his baggage on the way.

Alicante was the one strong place in Valencia that had not yet acknowledged him as suzerain,



and he seems to have considered its conquest worthy of his powers. But finding that Leake's ships had taken the place in his absence, he suddenly bade farewell to Spain and embarked for Italy. Arriving at Genoa, he raised a loan of £100,000, without any commission or authority from home, and at an extravagant rate of interest. With sinews of war thus reinvigorated, he hastened back to Valencia, there to receive, under the sign manual of Queen Anne, a peremptory summons to return to England. Count de Gallas, the Imperial ambassador in London, had put the Court of St. James's in possession of all that he had privately learnt from Prince Lichtenstein, and Marlborough had written in confidence to his duchess that, with regard to Peterborough, 'he did not think much ceremony ought to be used in removing him from a place where he had hazarded the loss of the whole kingdom.'<sup>1</sup>

These are hard words, and yet, if anything, insufficiently severe. For Peterborough's departure from Galway's camp is a little difficult to distinguish from the basest of military misdemeanours—desertion in the face of the enemy. Vain would be any attempt to prove him guilty of cowardice in any shape. He was always liable to carry rashness beyond the bounds of temerity. But when he allowed pique and injured self-love to carry him from the point of danger in a critical hour, he laid himself open to the same charge of desertion which was justly brought against Elizabeth's minion, the Earl of Essex, in 1599.

Yet, although even Peterborough's apologists and panegyrists find this blot upon his escutcheon very hard to erase, the blemish was not the most

<sup>1</sup> Coxe, *Life of Marlborough*, i. 471.

serious that can be imputed to him in the year 1706. He had openly threatened to effect the 'ruin' of the man who had saved Barcelona, and his unscrupulous antagonism convinced Leake that there was no further advantage to be expected from a continuance of their partnership. Three years of strenuous, uninterrupted labour gave Sir John a rich title to a period of rest; and an offer of leave, falling pat with his wishes, was welcomed by him as ending an intolerable state of things. Offering Peterborough an expression of regret that his services failed to give satisfaction, he sailed for England and arrived there in mid-October, never dreaming that a brief interval of but four short months would end the Earl's military career. From the outbreak of the war in Spain, the Navy of England had been the backbone of the allied cause; and, though the Admiral himself would have been the last to acknowledge it, the Navy of England depended on him as the body depends on the brain. His presence alone could have averted the crisis of the following year, and his departure was the signal for calamity. When Berwick invested Carthagena there was no relieving hand to save the city; and the success of Berwick at Carthagena rang up the curtain for the tragedy of Almanza. Of all the acts of mischief that Peterborough wrought in Spain, none more justly deserves a patriot's condemnation than the malignancy with which, for personal reasons, he deprived the Grand Alliance of the services of Leake in the campaign of 1707.

As regards his own ignominious recall, to do him justice, he took the matter lightly. Obedience was not a virtue that he had ever cultivated; and he set out, for his own diversion, on a circular

tour through Europe. He visited, among other celebrities, Prince Eugene, the Emperor Joseph, Charles XII of Sweden, the Electress Sophia, her son the future King of England, and the Duke of Marlborough. Eugene, who had no occasion to know that Peterborough could talk brilliantly on any subject, was surprised by his display of erudition in military science. Marlborough, who was bored almost beyond endurance by his visitor's reminiscences, stifled his yawns and to outward seeming was affability itself. He had already set on paper his true opinion of the Earl; but he was too tender of his own interests to risk giving offence to one whose natural venom, like a cobra's hood, dilated with the impulse of retaliation.

When Peterborough arrived in England, it was proposed by Harley that he should be arrested and brought to trial for his misdeeds; and, although such extreme measures were not eventually sanctioned, an official inquiry was ordered to be held, and charges were preferred against him. The House of Lords, solicitous for their order, made an attempt to draw a veil of decency over the past. But Peterborough was of another mind. He tore the veil asunder, that he might appeal to the million-headed multitude, who were willing to act as judges without cross-examining the evidence, or requiring to hear the other side of the case. In selecting an advocate, the Earl displayed his wonted acumen, his choice falling on Doctor Freind, the eminent London physician, who had accompanied him upon his peregrinations, and who, like other contemporaries of high intellectual attainment, found in his patron's wit and brilliant conversation the proof of talents which he did not possess. Doctor Freind,



like Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah, took horns of ink, and drove the truth before him with so lusty a zeal, that his *Account of the Earl of Peterborough's Conduct in Spain* has become a lying spirit in the mouth of all the prophets who have gone up with him to battle at Barcelona. His pamphlet, which may be described as a ponderous version of *Carleton's Memoirs*, did not achieve an immediate success. Carping critics asked whether the author was not better qualified to deal with matters medical rather than with matters military; and the coffee-house wits, detecting the hand behind the pen, facetiously labelled the tractate *A Vindication of the Earl of Peterborough, Written by the Earl of Monmouth*.

But the work was well done, and the seeds, sown in derision, were soon to produce an amazing harvest. In the autumn of 1710 Doctor Sacheverell was impeached, the chief Whig ministers were dismissed by Anne, and Parliament was dissolved. The Pacifist party, coming into power, needed a rod with which to chastise the Duke of Marlborough, and the superman of Doctor Freind's compilation served their purpose admirably. Peterborough, the most thorough-paced Whig that ever voted for a republic, became the idol of the Tories. His *Conduct in Spain* was venerated as gospel truth, and the more loudly his praises were sung the feebler sounded the eulogies of Marlborough. Prostration before the pedestal of the champion of the Peninsula became the test of allegiance to the new rulers of England; and the votes that were cast for Peterborough, and the thanks that were returned to him, prove nothing beyond the distribution of political parties at a time of unparalleled political rancour. To such low tricks did factious hate descend that

the rout of the Portuguese rabble at Almanza was cheerfully accepted as a British defeat, because a British defeat discredited Galway ; and the discrediting of Galway (who was Marlborough's nominee) brought the Duke to the House of Lords to speak in his defence ; and to give one word of praise for work done in Spain to any but the hero of Doctor Freind made even the victor of Blenheim look ridiculous.

Thus mendacity made Peterborough a man of action in the hour when he returned amid suffocating dust to his old place in the political arena. It need hardly be said that it was not as a man of action that his new partners employed him. He had served his turn, and was a dangerous weapon, liable at any moment to pierce the hand that used him for support. Like Charles and Lichtenstein at Barcelona, ministers of all shades of opinion desired nothing so much as to see his back, and diplomatic missions that would keep him abroad were thrust upon him and not rejected. For the remainder of Anne's reign he pirouetted round the courts of central Europe, always astonishing the most phlegmatic, and always acting outside his instructions. Secretaries of State entreated one another to tie him down to specific points : but such precautions were a mere waste of time, and the censures that followed a mere waste of paper. Even bay-trees, however, cease at last to be green ; and the accession of the house of Hanover thrust Peterborough against his will into an obscurity, in which he ceased to flourish exceedingly, and from which indeed he found it increasingly difficult to emerge. His posturing extravagances were now confined to the smaller world of Bath, and his trespasses against convention caused amazement chiefly

within the narrow circle of his kinsmen and his friends. He could still draw the best of Grub Street to his table; and, under the surgeon's knife, could still display all his amazing coolness and courage. But though the youngest septuagenarian at the accession of George II, he at length found the past more absorbing than the present, and took up the pen of the memoir-writer. How far he had proceeded when death seized him in 1735 cannot be said: for his wife, who had no reason for questioning his veracity, was so shocked by the ghastly details of a mis-spent life that she consigned his naughty reminiscences to the fire as soon as she had read them.

There is little enough reason, on the score of truth, to regret the pungent holocaust. Nor is it easy to believe that the memoirs, if preserved, would have done anything to enhance a military reputation built up by the Tory wire-pullers of 1710 with their deft manipulation of the Marlborough-shifting marionettes, Doctor Sacheverell and Doctor Freind. Not that the latter's pamphlet ever promised to occupy an abiding place in popular opinion. But it did promise a sequel of better things in store; and, as if in exact fulfilment of the prophecy, came *Carleton's Memoirs* to fix the tradition within ten years of Peterborough's death. It is an open question whether this doubtful work by an unknown author would be accepted to-day at its face value, even with the endorsement of Doctor Johnson, and the flattering preface of Sir Walter Scott. But Earl Stanhope's naïve acceptance of a picaresque romance as an indisputably authentic historical document brought forth into the lists Peterborough's most formidable champion, the lustiest, the lordliest, and the last.



In January 1833 Macaulay contributed to the *Edinburgh Review* his estimate of Earl Stanhope's earlier version of *The War of the Succession in Spain*. Earl Stanhope at that time was Lord Mahon, and Macaulay, after a tribute of patronising amiability, proceeded to use his 'noble author' as a stalking-horse for a fresh examination of the first Peninsular War. The result was an irresistibly fascinating essay, in which a passion for vivid history, an enthusiasm for real greatness, a wealth of apt imagery, and a joyous swinging style combined to produce for errant Peterborough what he had never had before, a dignified and decorous seat on the summit of Olympus. For this reason it is vitally essential to remember that the Essay is not so much the product of historical research as a contribution to the catalogue of literary masterpieces. The Peterborough of the Essay is so familiar to us that we know him better than our intimate neighbours; and he is so real that it is as difficult to dispose of him as to prove that Robinson Crusoe was never wrecked on a desert island, or never taught Friday to read the Bible.

If this analogy is not unfair, it may be carried with advantage a step further. Whatever Robinson Crusoe may have owed to the genius of Defoe, he could never have been created had not all his adventures actually happened in flesh and blood to Alexander Selkirk. And so with the Peterborough of Macaulay's imagining. He has been fed and pampered and fattened on the substance of Leake's achievements, until, like the lean kine of Pharaoh's dream, he has swallowed up Leake's personality. Macaulay lived at a time when naval history was at its lowest ebb, when in the security engendered by Trafalgar

England had forgotten what she owed to her fleet. Macaulay could marshal soldiers and statesmen for the fight : but he did not understand what seamen undergo, nor did he know of what battleships are capable. If his glowing Essay be read as fiction, its documentary value need not be rated more highly than *Captain Carleton's Memoirs* on which it is based. But if it be treated as sober history, then we may well be tempted to tear it in pieces, and begin by asking (when Peterborough is made to construct cavalrymen out of foot) whether it is not patent to any schoolboy in a lower form that *dragoons* in seventeenth-century phrase were what are now called mounted infantry.

In All Souls' Chapel, Oxford, on the eastern wall, there is one of earth's loveliest poems in stone—a Gothic screen, figured by the age of faith, embodying the sacred tradition of centuries, and fretted into admirable art by careful pains and loving labour. But of old it was defaced by iconoclasts, and then for generations hidden by a false wall of plaster erected in front of it. On the wall's glaring whitewash there was at length depicted a 'Judgment,' remarkable for the brilliance of its colouring, and the pose of figures, bent in perspective, and distorted by foreshortening.

So has it been with the naval campaign of 1705-6. It was based upon creeds handed down intact from Admiral to Admiral. It was moulded by a tradition of efficiency older than the monarchy of Spain. It too was rendered lovely by unrequited labour, and chiselled into symmetry by master hands guided by a master brain. But it was first defaced and hammered by unscrupulous vandals ; then screened by the whitewash

of Carleton and Freind; and finally forgotten behind the 'Judgment' of Lord Macaulay with its twisting of facts, its chromatic wealth of allusion, and its monstrous inversion of the central figures.

4. THE STANHOPE MYTH.—There is a fine superfluity of earls in the story of Leake; and in this, the final chapter, the plot revolves round two of the Stanhope creation.

James, the first Earl Stanhope, born in 1673, was one of the chief actors in the Spanish Succession War, where it may truly be said, without undue disparagement, that his most useful work was of a diplomatic nature. He was a minister rather than a soldier; a man of tact rather than of tactics. By swift and active measures, however, in after days he secured the accession of George I, and with sternness he repressed the legitimist rising that greeted it in the north. When the Hanoverian dynasty had been established, he served as Secretary of State for the Southern Department, and became from that hour, perhaps somewhat against his will, immersed in problems of statecraft. He was largely responsible, among other notable work, for the Septennial Act of 1716, and for the entente with France of the same year. He supported George I's Hanoverian ambitions; and when Walpole and Townshend, from dislike of them, laid down their portfolios, he became First Lord of the Treasury, Chancellor of the Exchequer, and virtual Prime Minister. This was in 1717, a year that saw his elevation to the peerage and his selection of the title, Viscount Mahon. In the following year he was advanced to an earldom; and in 1721, at the early age of forty-eight,



died from an effusion of blood on the brain, induced by a speech in the House of Lords on the subject of the South Sea Company.

Philip Henry, the fifth Earl, born in 1805, published his *History of the War of the Succession in Spain* in 1832; and as an historian made a name for himself by his *History of England from the Peace of Utrecht*, which began to appear in 1836, and was completed a quarter of a century later. In 1870 he completed his *Reign of Queen Anne*, to which, with his other works, reference has already been made. In the compilation of these chronicles he delved into the family archives, and, utilising the first Earl's papers, composed, with their assistance, the quite considerable military reputation which the first Earl still enjoys.

In so far as the life of Leake is concerned, the fifth Earl put forward on behalf of his ancestor two claims that demand examination. The first claim is that Spanish-Succession Stanhope of himself conceived in 1708 the scheme for the conquest of Minorca: and the second claim is that the same bright military genius not only put his daring scheme into effect, but that he did so unaided, and unsupported, and in the face of deliberate opposition from the fleet. The two claims may best be considered separately.

(1) The first claim almost invites flat and unqualified contradiction. It is as unreal as a shadow, as baseless as a dream. It does not deserve to be treated even as seriously as Peterborough's thesis that Leake allowed Toulouse to slip through his fingers. Citations from documents, quotations from official letters compose too clumsy an implement to dispel such thin stuff. The whole misunderstanding, for it is

nothing more, can be cleared away by a little parable.

Our scene is the nursery. Mother is engaged with callers. Nurse is chatting on important topics in the Servants' Hall. Jane the under-nurse is mending Baby's things. Suddenly Baby wakes and shrieks as if a serpent were gnawing his vitals. Mother, nurse, and Jane hear the noise. But Jane is nearest. She seizes Baby's bottle, applies it to his mouth, and the storm subsides. But imagine Mother's feelings and nurse's rage, when Jane remarks that she first heard the noise, and that she alone discerned the remedy. They all heard the noise. They all knew what it meant. Jane's claims are ludicrous, ridiculous, absurd.

And so with the scheme for the conquest of Minorca. Solomon himself would be puzzled to find an equitable basis on which to adjudicate the conflicting claims of Nurse Stanhope, Nurse Marlborough, and Nurse Sunderland. Nurse Stanhope, stationed with Charles at Barcelona, was on the spot, and so enjoyed an undue advantage. But how, in common fairness, are we to set aside the sapient letters of Marlborough to Count Wratislaw and Count Zinzendorf? Or the admirable acumen and foresight evidenced in the Instructions that Sunderland drafted?

Descend to such details, and the dust off the documents flies up in a cloud to obscure the point of the parable. And the point of the parable is this: that the need of the bottle was first discovered, not by the nurses, but by Baby himself. Hence his screams!

Substitute for Minorca the words '*adequate base in the Mediterranean*,' and the subject assumes a new complexion. In reading the volumes of the fifth Earl Stanhope, one would suppose that a

fleet of ships had no discoverable relationship to a base, but floated round the world without more tangible need of support than a flock of fleecy clouds in the sky. England has been blamed for not providing her *Dreadnoughts* with sufficient accommodation before she went to war with Germany in 1914. But two hundred years earlier she sent her fleets to the Mediterranean without so much as a roadstead they could call their own. Naturally enough, an adequate base in the Mediterranean had been the one desideratum on which the Navy had laid stress ever since the outbreak of war.<sup>1</sup> It was the prime motive of the expedition to Cadiz in 1702; and when the expedition to Cadiz failed, the identical motive underlay the negotiations that resulted in the Portuguese alliance. Lisbon, however, was far too distant to support a fleet operating in the Mediterranean: and as for Gibraltar (a rock, be it understood, and not a harbour), so far from supplying a berth for the fleet, it only imposed an additional reason why Lisbon should be discarded, and something better substituted. If there was one man more than another to whom all this was apparent, it was the Admiral who had been called upon to do the work without the necessary means for its performance. And not once, nor twice, had Leake pointed out where the Mediterranean squadron should be housed.

The knowledge naturally was not confined

<sup>1</sup> Sir Julian Corbett has shown in his *England in the Mediterranean* (ii. 545) that a pamphlet, appearing anonymously in 1707 under the title *An Enquiry into the Causes of our Naval Miscarriages*, not only demonstrated the immediate need of seizing Minorca, but insisted that the island ought to have been occupied not later than the close of 1702. The tract will be found in the *Harleian Miscellany*, xi. 5-28.



to him. In naval circles the matter had been thrashed out again and again ; and Minorca was then almost as threadbare a topic as Heligoland in 1914. Those who clamoured for the isle recalled the sixteenth-century apothegm that the Mediterranean possesses only three first-class harbours—June, July, and Port Mahon. The Navy were at one in demanding the immediate acquisition of Minorca, or in default thereof—Toulon. But they would listen to no third alternative. Marlborough offered them Spezzia : but they put the suggestion aside without impatience, and merely repeated their demand. Marlborough noted their case, and presented it to the other members of the Grand Alliance. But there the matter ended. Time slipped by, the war entered its fifth year, and nothing as yet was done. Nor is the reason of the delay far to seek. For Nature has failed to provide the Naval Officer with any counterpart of the squealing outfit of the Baby in the parable. If, like Admiral Vernon, he expostulates too loudly, he is ridiculed as a marine-politician or cashiered as a sea-lawyer. Only one course remains open to him, and that is to lay his dead body across the statesman's doorstep. And this is what happened in the war of the Spanish Succession. The defeat of Almanza was not the only disaster that overtook this country in 1707. The tragic death of Sir Cloudisley Shovell, and the casting away of his squadron, at length showed the Government the criminal fatuity of recalling their fleet (when summer was ended) through the cruel death-grip of the winter storms.

The sequence of events is too close, too patent, and too obvious to be missed. In 1707 the British Mediterranean squadron met with a calamity

that sent a shudder through the land : and in 1708 the conquest of Minorca was undertaken.

(2) In dealing with the capture of the island, the fifth Earl Stanhope does not so much as mention Leake's name. Indeed, an intelligent Hindu, with no knowledge of Spanish geography, would be perfectly justified in supposing that the first Earl Stanhope's route to Port Mahon was not likely to be impeded by anything wetter than would be experienced between Burgos and Valladolid. However excusable in an Asiatic, such a mistake would be reckoned crass ignorance in a European. And yet the majority of historians have accepted the Stanhope myth, as if its truth were based upon the very pillars of the world.

The story takes us back to the point where the recall of Peterborough interrupted our review of the campaign at large. The principal actors, it will be remembered, had at Galway's summons joined him in his camp at Guadalaxara, where he faced the Duke of Berwick and covered the capital which he had so valiantly entered and occupied. The position, however, was precarious ; and, as Berwick's forces daily increased and the guerilleros hourly grew more pestilent, it was in full conclave agreed that no course remained but to abandon Madrid, and march to the eastern coast while communications thither remained open. The decision was undoubtedly wise ; and the retreat was conducted without mishap. Before the end of the year 1706 the allied forces were in Valencia, with the sea in view as a pledge of safety and as an inspiration for the coming campaign.

Unfortunately the counsels of the allies were vitiated by false principles, and undermined by the spirit of contention. The rally at Guadalaxara had at least been advantageous in uniting the

armies opposed to France ; and yet the removal of immediate danger suggested nothing but separation and regrouping. Count Noyelles, whose only fear was lest his command should be absorbed in Galway's, carried the Catalonian contingent (including the 'King') back to Barcelona. In doing so he completely effaced himself, and faded into the shadowland from which he should never have been drawn. For the moment, then, Galway held the centre of the stage.

Had he chosen to do so, he could have made for himself at Alicante as snug a city of refuge as Charles and Noyelles enjoyed further north. Had he possessed any aptitude for combined warfare, or any knowledge of the maritime history of England, he might have driven his opponents to distraction by transferring oversea to some new point of impact an army which had already crossed the Peninsula from Atlantic to Mediterranean. But his only idea was to seek his adversary and thrash him ; and, as soon as reinforcements from home had disembarked at Alicante, he offered the Duke of Berwick the very chance which that general most desired. On April 25, 1707, the battle of Almanza was fought ; and of the 15,000 heterogeneous troops which represented the Grand Alliance, and which the French outnumbered by five to three, nearly one half were lost.

The fatal nature of the affray has been much exaggerated, particularly at the political crisis of 1710, to which allusion has already been made. The disaster may have ended the military career of Galway : and beyond doubt it transferred Valencia temporarily to Philip V.<sup>1</sup> But it

<sup>1</sup> Alicante held out until March 1709.



certainly did not entail the loss of Spain. Indeed, it came as a timely aid to clearer thinking, and was bravely utilised as a taking-off place for a new departure, like the 'Black Week' in December 1899. Galway returned by sea to Lisbon with instructions to confine himself to the defence of that capital; and at the court of Barcelona fresh plans were inaugurated. It was felt, and rightly felt, that Almanza was primarily a defeat of the Portuguese; and such being the case, it was judged inexpedient to rely upon them any further. The English soldiery, of course, were fully employed in the Low Countries. If ever the Spanish crown was to rest securely on Charles's head, resort must be had to Imperial troops and to Austria as a recruiting ground. The greedy and self-seeking Noyelles dying opportunely, application was made to Vienna for the best available field officer in the Emperor's service. Some hopes were entertained that Prince Eugene might be spared; and it is interesting to speculate what might have happened had he taken up the task where Galway laid it down. Among other effects, it is conceivable that the English troops in the Peninsula might have been permitted to serve directly under him. But Eugene could not be spared, and a golden opportunity passed. Instead, there came from Vienna a very notable soldier, Count Staremberg, who in the Imperial service was inferior to the Prince, but inferior to nobody else. With him James Stanhope was associated as Commander-in-Chief of the English troops that still remained in Catalonia. The choice was in many ways excellent, for Stanhope was undoubtedly a man of courtesy and *savoir-faire*; and when leadership is put in commission such qualities are beyond

all price. When the two generals met at 'Charles III's' headquarters, they set themselves to devise schemes for the entire reorganisation of the striking forces available ; for recent occurrences had unravelled what time had wrought, and put back the hands of the clock.

Such was the situation of things when, at the beginning of 1708, Leake returned to the Mediterranean. He found himself confronted with a double task. He was asked to bridge the gulf between Genoa and Barcelona, so that the Austrian levies could pour into the Peninsula and redress the balance of the fight ; and as the battle of Almanza had deprived the allies of the Valencian harvests at the very moment when there were additional mouths to be filled, he was requested to secure at the earliest moment a suitable and commodious granary. It is hardly necessary to add that he performed with his customary silence and expedition all that was asked of him. He carried the Austrian legions from Italy to Spain ; and to ensure for them a regular supply of corn he conquered the island of Sardinia.

He was returning from Cagliari in the autumn of 1708, when he received a letter from General Stanhope. The victory of Oudenarde had for the moment removed all 'Charles III's' anxieties ; and the withdrawal of French troops from Catalonia, consequent upon the allied triumph in the Low Countries, made it possible to employ the troops at Barcelona upon an errand outside the main field of activity. The General reported that he had obtained the royal assent to a military expedition against Minorca, and proposed to command the troops in person. He had applied to London for the necessary sanction and approval, and made little doubt that a missive, addressed

to the Admiral, which he hastened to forward, embodied orders for the co-operation of the fleet.

Leake, who was only too gratified to learn that his pet scheme was at last to be put into execution, tore open the letter that Stanhope named, and found urgent papers instructing him to exact from the Pope an expression of regret for having offered up prayers in time of war for the enemies of Queen Anne.

The orders were far too specific to be misunderstood, and far too importunate to be set aside. And yet Leake treated them with the same independence of judgment as when he ignored (in the hour of Barcelona's trial) the Earl of Peterborough's viceregal injunctions to attend to viceregal requirements. Once more he preferred the greater to the less; and, brushing aside the Papal business, he pounced upon Minorca.

He severed at a blow all external communications, and isolated the island from the outside world. The rigour of his iron blockade not unnaturally terrified the inhabitants; and knowing that the Admiral, who now held them in his grip, had already captured Iviza, Majorca, and Sardinia, they cherished no illusions as to the fate that was in store for them. It wanted but little to persuade them how to act; and, when they learned that Leake had seized a landing-place, and could send ashore at will as many troops as he pleased, they deemed it expedient to declare for 'King Charles,' and the Mayor of Port Mahon, the capital city, made haste to surrender his keys.

Thus Minorca passed into English hands, with the sole exception of the fortress of St. Philip, whose strong works and French garrison still commanded the harbour. The surrender of the castle was merely a matter of time, for the garrison



could expect no renewal of supplies save from the Toulon fleet. And the Toulon fleet, as past events had shown, was not prepared to risk a pitched encounter. Hunger was bound to do its work, and Fort St. Philip was doomed.

On the eighth day of operations General Stanhope arrived, and was cordially welcomed. He had, during his voyage, been cudgelling his brain to discover how the fleet could be of use to him, and it is gratifying to learn that he had not been unsuccessful in finding an answer to the problem. He now informed the Admiral that Fort St. Philip must be reduced by artillery, and he expressed a hope that the Navy would put him in a position to destroy the French works with the necessary weapons. Sir John Leake willingly agreed, but found that he had undertaken a difficult task. The siege-guns were unwieldy, there was no machinery for moving them, and the only place where they could be put ashore was under the fire of the enemy. These hindrances constituted a formidable argument for relying on hunger rather than on force. But the Admiral did not think it his duty to point this out. He made it his business to overcome the almost insuperable difficulties, and the adaptability of the force he commanded paved the way to success. The seamen converted themselves into human derricks and cranes; and as they had done at Barcelona in 1705, and as they were again to do at Quebec in 1759, they lifted the heavy ordnance from the ships to the shore, cheerfully disregarding the enemy's fusillade, and counting their immense toil as worth no more thanks than sending down topmasts or weighing anchors. When the siege-pieces and mortars had been set in position, Sir John provided the best of his

expert gunners to lay the guns, and handy men from the lower deck to serve them. And so the batteries opened fire.

Meanwhile, Stanhope had been exercising his ingenuity in devising fresh modes of employing the fleet; and, with a diplomatic subtlety that served his country well and should not be overlooked, he decided that, when it came to garrisoning the island, it would be better to make use of Leake's men rather than his own. The troops that he had brought were 'King Charles's' troops, and, if engaged for garrison duty, might constitute for 'King Charles' a title to Minorca when terms of Peace were discussed. On the other hand, if Sir John's marines took upon themselves the island guard, complications of an awkward kind might be altogether avoided. It is needless to add that when the idea was broached to the Admiral he instantly acquiesced.

The work being now all but complete, and the year at the fall, Leake singled out a squadron under Sir Edward Whitaker to maintain the blockade of Minorca until the hour when Fort Philip surrendered, and with the remainder of the Grand Fleet he hurried home. Those who are acutely alive to what a dramatic situation requires will probably regret that he did not remain off Port Mahon until the French in Fort Philip lowered their flag. This, however, would be to overlook the naval side of the problem confronting him. Minorca was to all intents and purposes won; but the reasons for which its conquest was undertaken had not yet had time to fructify. Port Mahon was not yet an English dockyard; could not, indeed, be converted into an English dockyard at the earliest until the winter of 1709-10. There was still no available

Mediterranean base for the Grand Fleet ; and it was Leake's duty to get the Grand Fleet home safely, and not risk a repetition of the fell catastrophe which had engulfed Sir Clowdisley Shovell in the previous year.

When he turned his back on the island that had submitted to him, he imagined that Fort Philip would at least give a good account of itself. But in this surmise, as events proved, he was altogether mistaken. At the first assault the garrison hauled down their colours, and General Stanhope blandly took possession. The final approach occasioned no more than forty casualties, and the only serious loss was the general's brother, Captain Philip Stanhope, R.N. So speedily was the last scene set, and the curtain rung down, that the Grand Fleet might have waited until the end, and still reached home in good time. But even had he known that Clan Stanhope would claim the entire credit for the enterprise, it is doubtful whether Leake would have permitted a bit of pageantry to interfere with the performance of his duty. Achievement, and not the credit for achievement, was the motive that governed his life.

Such, then, being the facts of the case, all detailed and documented in the pages that follow, how did the fifth Earl Stanhope dare to assert that his ancestor, unaided, captured Minorca in the face of opposition from the fleet ? The reference is to a small squadron which Leake, during his own absence at Sardinia, had left to guard and wait upon the court of 'Charles III.' General Stanhope, having persuaded the Austrians to allow him to attempt Minorca, invited this squadron (which was bound by its own instructions) to accompany him on his expedition. The



captains, one of whom was the General's own brother Philip Stanhope, held a council of war, and the result of their deliberations is printed in full on pp. 608-9. It would be a thousand pities to deprive the reader of the pleasure of examining the document for himself.

Philip Henry, fifth Earl Stanhope, was not in the modern sense an archivist. Where his own family papers failed him, he turned with childish trustfulness to the dryasdust chronicler Abel Boyer, whose name has already come up for mention. Boyer certainly knew more than Stanhope: yet Stanhope is occasionally read, and Boyer practically never. No good turn would therefore be served by instituting comparisons or pursuing the matter any further. *Arcades ambo!* Whatever the merits of the one, or the shortcomings of the other, they were alike in this: that they knew as little of the workings of sea-power as William Edward Hartpole Lecky.

So much then for the fifth Earl. What of the first? Was General Stanhope any better informed in maritime affairs than the historian, his descendant? He was, as we have seen, undoubtedly anxious that Minorca should be captured in 1708; but his anxiety was rooted, not so much in strategical principles, as in personal considerations. He was now in charge of the British troops in Spain; and, like Hesse-Darmstadt under similar circumstances, he did not mean to be left alone if he could possibly help it. Before he would give his consent to any ambitious programme of a military character, he meant to have the British fleet immovably behind him, with no occasion, as in 1706, to visit Lisbon for supplies. His desire to give the navy what the navy wanted, in order that he might receive its

uninterrupted support, betrays a subconscious instinct for combined warfare rather than a deliberate recognition of its possibilities.

It has been said that Port Mahon could not be converted into an English dockyard until, at the earliest, the winter of 1709-10. Accordingly we find no movement made by the new concentration at Barcelona during the summer of that year. But when at last the adequate Mediterranean base had been equipped, when at last the Main Fleet could stay away from home as long as its invaluable services were required, then Staremborg and Stanhope made a move.

In the spring of 1710 they had all that they could possibly want : men in abundance, provisions, guns, small arms, and ammunition. Sardinia sent its supplies of corn : Port Mahon housed the ships. The allied army, now numbering 25,000 troops, advanced into Aragon, and achieved a remarkable degree of success. The victory of Almenara in July more than avenged the disgrace of Almanza ; and the capture of Saragossa in August opened the gate of the upper Ebro, and with it the path to boundless possibilities.

But here, unhappily, there arose a difference of opinion as to future plans ; a difference of opinion which cleft the camp with a cleavage that was racial. Staremborg, who naturally enough received the full support of 'Charles III,' advocated a swift advance into the province of Navarre. By adopting this route, so he pleaded, two grand advantages would be gained. In the first place, they could find at Santander, or some other Biscay port, a new base for the British ships ; and, with the advent and proximity of the British ships, they would possess an infinitely better backing for the camp. And in the second place, by

holding the Pampeluna gap or Pass of Roncesvalles, they could deny to French reinforcements all further ingress into Spain, and to the armies of Louis south of the Pyrenees all hope of eventual escape. It was the very plan adopted by Wellington in the campaign of Vittoria; and, if utilised in 1710, might have ended the First Peninsular War as successfully as the Second.

Against this proposal General Stanhope stood out with unyielding firmness. He was an Englishman, and therefore, according to some, was endowed with an innate sense of what the situation demanded on its maritime side. He put his views before the Council with exemplary clearness, and, as representative of the Power that had contributed most in the Spanish theatre of the war, was listened to with respect. His view was that, while the enemy was dispirited, and the allied army elated by success, they ought to strike boldly into the heart of Castile, and, if possible, occupy Madrid. It was the very plan that Peterborough had advocated; the very plan that had fallen to pieces in the very hour when Galway brought it to fruition. But though it had been weighed in the balance and found wanting, the idea assumed a fresh lustre and a novel attractiveness as Stanhope urged its claims. He may have had little of Galway's military art, but he certainly had skill to win the battles of diplomacy. Under the suave and dulcet influence of his polyglot pleading, even 'Charles III' recognised a true friend of Austria, even Staremberg forgot his own sound common sense. Stanhope persuaded his audience in spite of themselves. The sea was forgotten, the navy ignored; and leaving open the Pampeluna gap, the infatuated allies made their push for Madrid.



Everything for a while conspired to applaud the sagacity of Stanhope. Bridgeless rivers were crossed, and boulder-strewn waste places traversed. Resistance ceased like a nightmare at waking, and anticipated difficulties daily declined. At length the goal drew near, the pilgrimage ended, and with shouts of triumph the allied forces rode into the capital. Galway's brilliant achievement was actually surpassed. Instead of proclaiming their candidate as King, the conquerors of Madrid set Charles himself upon the throne.

But the Pampeluna gate was not merely ajar. It was wide open. And through the Pampeluna gate Louis XIV, to redress the situation, sent Vendôme, France's greatest marshal since Luxembourg. At his coming the guerilleros, with mysterious unanimity, rose as they had risen against Galway in 1706, from behind every rock, from behind every byre, from behind every clump of trees. There was nothing for it but immediate retreat; immediate retreat to—the sea. The King under escort was sent ahead to his old quarters at Barcelona, and Stanhope and Staremberg held the field and combined to cover his traces. They marched in parallel columns in order of nationality, and had they been matched against a less resourceful opponent might have got clear away. But Vendôme swooped upon Stanhope, and at Brihuega swept his force off the board, the General himself being taken prisoner and remaining in durance to the end of the war. Vendôme then turned upon Staremberg, who had done his level best to rescue Stanhope, and at Villa Viciosa<sup>1</sup> brought him to battle. Staremberg lost very heavily, but, after a stiff

<sup>1</sup> December 1710.

engagement, earned the right to withdraw to Barcelona without further molestation.

And so the War of the Succession in Spain reached its ignominious close.<sup>1</sup>

It was the nemesis of a warlike situation completely misunderstood, and upon the shoulders of Stanhope the chief burden of blame must be securely fastened. Not Galway, not Noyelles, not even Peterborough himself, showed less aptitude for combined warfare, less grip of things thalattocratic. How ridiculous then to ascribe to him all that is meant by the conquest of Minorca—the recognition of the Navy's needs, the right use of the fleet as a weapon! England beyond doubt is indebted to his memory; not least on account of his timely insistence that Minorca, once captured, must never be abandoned. But the conquest of the island, in which he was privileged to play a minor part, was as much the fruit of Britain's indisputable naval power, as the recovery from pawn of the Lesser Antilles after the battle of the Saints; as much the fruit of Britain's undisputed naval power as the conquest of the far-flung German Colonies in the Great War of 1914.

The mention of the German Colonies serves to change the focus of this Introduction, and bring it momentarily to bear upon a point raised in an earlier paragraph. When the War of the Spanish Succession broke out, England resolved to throw her trident into the scale, and found for her fleet

<sup>1</sup> In April 1711, by the death of his brother Joseph, 'King Charles III' became the Emperor Charles VI, and on September 27, in the same year, he was escorted back to Genoa by the British fleet under the command of Sir John Jennings.

work well suited to its genius round the coasts of the Peninsula. But this was not the only possible course. There was another alternative of richer promise. England might have satisfied herself with supporting the continental war, while without hindrance she helped herself to the French transatlantic possessions.

The main gateway to an unoccupied North America was the mouth of the river St. Lawrence ; and this was held in monopoly by the French, with its right doorpost, Newfoundland,<sup>1</sup> with its left doorpost, Acadia, and with its fortress-key, Quebec. In 1702, at the very beginning of the war, before the full extent of its immensity had obsessed the minds of statesmen, an expedition was equipped to assault the right-hand doorpost, and this expedition was entrusted to Leake. He was at the time a Commodore, and the commission with which he was entrusted was his first really independent command. He executed it with a completeness which can only properly be gauged by reading the story in detail. It must suffice here to say that he brushed the French settlements off the map, and accounted for over fifty ships. The exploit entitles him to higher honour than he

<sup>1</sup> ' Monopoly ' seems a strong word to use of the French occupation of Newfoundland, seeing that the English had enjoyed the best that its banks could yield ever since the end of the fifteenth century. The fishers, however, persistently pursued a policy of suicidal selfishness. Their fleets returned home at the close of each season ; and, lest the interests of a resident population should conflict with their own, they did their best to prevent the island from ever being colonised. They prevailed upon the Crown to support their policy, but could, of course, get no satisfaction in the case of foreign encroachments. Not unnaturally, the French took every occasion to extend their own settlements in a land from which Englishmen (by their own government) were excluded.



enjoys to-day, even if there had been nothing more to follow. At the time it had the beneficial effect of bringing him to the favourable notice of the Government. He was offered a knighthood, which (as we have seen) he declined.

It was not until the Peninsular part of the war was practically over that anything ambitious was undertaken to complete Leake's work. But in 1710 the remarkably successful operations of Martin and Nicholson led to the surrender of Annapolis; and the conversion of Acadia into Nova Scotia suggested to the government that the time was ripe for the conquest of Quebec. In 1711 an ill-prepared expedition was hurried across the Atlantic under Admiral Sir Hovenden Walker and General Hill (brother of Abigail Masham). It proved, unhappily, the one big naval failure of the war, and gave the French another chance of damming the river by the fortifications of Louisbourg. Sir Hovenden Walker was saddled with the entire blame for the disaster; and this, though unjust, was probably inevitable, because the campaign showed that Quebec was safe enough until assailed by a better admiral in command of a better fleet. But the point to notice, in its bearing on the subject of this biography, is that, when (in 1759) the better Admiral and the better fleet mastered all the difficulties of a river campaign, the entire credit for the fall of Quebec was given to the General. If Leake had been sent against Quebec in 1711, it is morally certain that the result would have been different; but with such bogeys as Peterborough and Stanhope drawing attention to themselves at every turn, one is impelled to the belief that the fame of the performance would have been snatched by someone else.

When *crédit* is given where credit is due, it will not be uninteresting to turn again to the Peace of Utrecht; and, tabulating the solid territorial gains that accrued to this country—Gibraltar, Minorca, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland—to ask how much, directly or indirectly, must be scored on the slate of our sluggish memories as a debt to Sir John Leake.

The Admiral died in 1720; and, as his only son had predeceased him, he left his estate, his papers, and his name to his fidus Achates, Stephen Martin. Stephen Martin (whose biography has already appeared as Volume V of the present series) was born in the year 1666, and was therefore ten years the Admiral's junior. As a midshipman of the *Montagu* he was in 1688 found guilty of mocking at the 'popish pageantry' introduced by the mass priests of James II, and was in consequence discharged his ship. In an hour of anxiety he was befriended by Leake, who was just commissioning the first mortar-boat, *Firedrake*. From that hour the two friends were seldom parted; and their close friendship was cemented by their marriage with two sisters, Christian and Elizabeth Hill. Like the retainers of another good knight of those days, Sir Roger de Coverley, the associates of Sir John Leake asked for nothing better than to grow old along with him; and half a century after their first acquaintance we find Stephen Martin following his brother-in-law into retirement, and putting aside firmly all inducements to stay in the Service after the Admiral had left it. In 1721 he obtained licence to adopt his benefactor's name, and so became the first Stephen Martin-Leake.

Stephen Martin-Leake the second, son of the

preceding, nephew of Sir John Leake, and author of the biography which is herewith presented, was born in 1702. At the age of sixteen he obtained a clerkship in the Navy Pay Office, and in 1723 was admitted of the Middle Temple. In 1724 he was nominated Deputy Lieutenant of the Tower Hamlets, and in an official capacity distinguished himself during the second Jacobite rebellion. It was however when he entered the College of Arms that he found his true vocation. In 1727 he became Lancaster Herald, and two years later resigned his position in the Navy Pay Office to take up his appointment as Norroy. In 1741 he was created Clarenceux, and in 1754 rose to the head of his profession as Garter King-of-Arms. He was a Fellow of the Royal Society and of the Society of Antiquaries, a ferocious upholder of his order, a devotee to genealogy, an enthusiastic numismatist, and notable scholar. He married in 1735, had nine children, and, dying in 1773, was buried in the chancel of Thorpe le Soken Church, Essex. In addition to the life of his father, and the *Life of Sir John Leake* which he undertook as a pious duty, and at his father's express desire, he also published an historical account of English money from the time of the Norman Conquest, which he christened *Nummi Britannici Historia*. The work, which by modern authorities is considered meritorious but too contracted in scope, first appeared in 1726, was enlarged in 1745, and reached a third edition in 1793.

For the composition of his chief work, the life of his uncle Sir John Leake, it is clear that he was not altogether badly equipped. If he was not an archivist, he was a notable genealogist, and knew how to grapple with some of the obstacles that beset the path of the biographer. The



Leake papers were voluminous ; and, so far from shirking their examination, he scrutinized them and set them in order with professional skill and tender care.<sup>1</sup> From these he turned to three printed works of pre-eminent authority: the *Impartial Enquiry into the Management of the War in Spain*, the *Transactions at Sea* of Josiah Burchett (1720), and the *Naval History* of Thomas Lediard (1735).

The *Impartial Enquiry* was published in 1712 as a counterblast to Dr. Freind's pamphlet, *An Account of the Earl of Peterborough's Conduct in Spain* (1707). Its value has been depreciated by some critics because the original documents which it purports to reproduce are for the most part not now discoverable. But our author tells us that his uncle and Sir Clowdisley Shovell stood sponsors for the work, and provided many of the papers on which it was based ; and he tells us further that he had collated many of the printed documents with the originals and found the transcription reliable. To this it should be added that although the endorsement of Sir John Leake, Sir Clowdisley Shovell, and the Garter King might be considered almost sufficient warranty by itself, the industry of Sir John Laughton has, in the case of at least one document, unearthed the original at the Public Record Office.<sup>2</sup>

Of Josiah Burchett, Pepys's successor at the Admiralty, it is unnecessary to say more here than

<sup>1</sup> Thirteen volumes of MSS. comprising original commissions, letters, orders, instructions, minutes of courts-martial, &c., &c.; were presented by Stephen Martin-Leake the third (Garter's son) to the British Museum.

<sup>2</sup> Letter of March 24, 1705-6, enclosing copy of Peterborough's order dated 'Valencia, 10 March, 1705-6.' Home Office Records, Admiralty Bundle No. 18.

that he was a safe guide when given a literal interpretation on matters of hard fact, but that he preserved throughout his literary labours the studied air of perfectly correct and uninformative officialism which many years of public service had imposed upon him.<sup>1</sup>

Thomas Lediard (1685-1743), although he had none of Burchett's opportunities for observing in person what happened behind the scenes, enjoyed a much higher place in our author's favour and estimation. He was an attaché of the Embassy at Hamburg, and was for several years lent to Marlborough as foreign secretary. He wrote an opera, conceived the idea of a bridge at Westminster, and as a linguist had exceptional gifts. He early developed a real taste for history and composed works on the reigns of William III and Anne, in addition to a biography of his master, the great Duke. These books are now forgotten, but his *Naval History* (the first compilation of its kind) is still, in spite of its two rather cumbersome folio volumes, valued and perused. Lediard had some knowledge from his own sea voyages of what sailing ships were capable, and incapable, of performing; and his association with Marlborough gave him a certain insight into the operations of war. He took Burchett's production as the lay figure on which to build up the form of his book, but undoubtedly made real efforts to clothe a clumsy wooden anatomy with the vitalising vestments of research.

In addition to the Leake archives, Sir John's exquisitely kept logs, the *Impartial Enquiry*, Burchett and Lediard, the Garter King read carefully through the scissor and paste-pot chronicles

<sup>1</sup> See also below, vol. i. p. 38.

of Abel Boyer, which were no more trustworthy than such synchronistic edifices usually are. He was grateful for Boyer's praise of Leake, but spent more time in correcting the chronicler's judgments than such ephemeral and hasty opinions properly deserved. To the *Memoirs of Captain Carleton*, which had already run through three editions, our author does not devote one single line; and we remain in doubt whether he scorned to mention the book or left it unread from ignorance of the thing's existence.

It would be an easy task to pick holes in Garter King's *Life of Sir John Leake*. Our author was unacquainted with conditions governing naval warfare. He never went to sea, and had no criteria by which to judge the problems arising out of a pitched battle. Interesting as are his discussions on points of promotion, precedence, and etiquette, it would be a mistake to attach overmuch value to his reflections and comments on such an affray as Malaga. He gave to this subject the space which its importance demanded, but the obscurity which clouds our knowledge of the encounter is thickened rather than diminished by his wild surmises and his vain struggles to grapple with unfamiliar material.

The reader will find, too, an honest, almost heroic, effort to deal intelligently with a mountain of facts, rather than any marked ability to seize upon the salient angles. With a fund of documents and papers at his disposal, our author might have devoted more of his attention to the memorable relief of Barcelona, and used the pruning-knife more ruthlessly in his treatment of the Channel campaigning with which Sir John Leake was afflicted after his last return from the Mediterranean. In the former episode no details



would have come amiss ; in the latter every additional word accentuates the tedium.

These, however, are venial shortcomings, the result of ignorance or lack of training. The chief fault of the book is its total inadequacy as a piece of portraiture. It has not one tithe of the characterisation that one expects in such a work, and which would doubtless have been there had the book been written by Leake's chaplain or doctor, or by such men as those whose ' narratives,' ' brief discourses,' and ' summary views ' make up the corpus of Purchas and Hakluyt. Gladly would we sacrifice three chapters, or four, in exchange for half a dozen of the anecdotes which make St. Vincent step alive from the frame of Jedediah Tucker. The pages that follow contain a truthful record of the acts of the Admiral and all that he did, but they do not help us to visualise him as we can visualise Drake, and Blake, and Nelson. In extenuation of our author's style, it must be said that he had the misfortune to write just before the art of making biographies was revolutionised. There was in his day no Boswell to show how the thing should be done ; and those who look for tittle-tattle, scraps of conversation over the dinner-table, gossipy anecdotes, interviews, confidences, and personal reminiscences will be sadly disappointed.

The book is a panegyric rather than a biography ; and as a panegyric it falls into an error common to other works of the kind. It seeks to enhance its subject's prestige by belittling other men in the same profession. Peterborough is treated with studied moderation and restraint, because it did not occur to our author that any sane person would suppose that the Earl ever in person commanded a fleet. But Russell, Shovell, Rooke, Sir Thomas Hardy, and in par-

ticular George Byng, receive much less than justice in the pages that follow. And the reason of course, is not far to seek. Our author inherited the family tradition that his uncle was the greatest seaman of Anne's reign ; and he lived long enough to realise that, of all the seamen of Anne's reign, his uncle was by posterity the most neglected. He was unable to gauge the causes for this (causes which have been analysed above), and endeavoured to exalt the stature of Sir John by cutting down those who seemed to him too tall. Such a manner of meting out posthumous justice will recommend itself to nobody, and slightly detracts from the value of the book by the dark reflections it seems to cast on our author's sense of fair play.

It was not, however, for its ignorance of naval tactics, for its occasionally irksome insistence on maritime minutiae, for its uninspired literary style, and for its carping tone towards other naval worthies, that Earl Stanhope, after inspecting the present work, rejected it as unauthentic, and in doing so diverted from it the attention of all who respected his opinion. His reasons for consigning the present biography to the dust-heap were two in number : and they should be carefully noted by a generation not impervious to the calls of the higher criticism. His first reason was that *The Life of Sir John Leake* flatly contradicted *Carleton's Memoirs* which he had decided to accept with both hands ; and his second reason was that the book (if true) fundamentally undermined the reputation of the Earl of Peterborough, which he sentimentally thought almost as sacrosanct as the British constitution.

If anyone feels inclined to take these arguments seriously, let him remember that Garter King's biography of his uncle was never intended for

publication. It was not armed point device, like Freind's *Conduct* or even as the *Impartial Enquiry*, so as to take its place like a gladiator in the pamphleteering shows that amuse the British public when there is nothing else afoot. It was written as a pious duty, at a father's request, for the information of the family circle only. Looked at in this light, its imperfections disappear. There was little harm in saying by one's own fireside that the victory of Malaga was due almost entirely to one's ancestor who was the first to begin fighting and the last to leave off. There was even less harm, to such a restricted audience, in saying that Sir George Byng always managed to fall on his feet ; or that the seaman who rode out the storm of 1703 would not, like Sir Cloudisley Shovell, have lost his flagship off the Scillies. If the book is in places tedious, and lacks literary skill, it must be remembered that its author did not expose it for sale, or hawk his wares in the public market.

Being designed for home consumption, the book is impartial and unbiased to a degree for which we can never be too truly thankful ; and as the author preferred to trust for realistic effect to letters and documents rather than any historiographic art of his own, we have in his meticulous compilation a work which throws welcome light on the handling of fleets, the use of signals, the sailing and fighting instructions of the period, the holding of courts-martial, and conditions of life afloat ; and which on a moderate computation is worth all the available works on Queen Anne's navy piled in a heap and taken together.

Not only was the book never intended for publication, but it was never published. When the last word had been written, the whole work



was recopied with all the care and much of the beauty bestowed upon a mediæval manuscript. There were ornate and elaborate headpieces and tailpieces to each of the separate parts, together with carefully drawn maps to illustrate the narrative. But when all the resources of the Herald's Office had been exhausted, and the result beyond question duly admired, the author seems to have been unwilling to expose his *magnum opus* to the risks which menace a single copy. He therefore lessened the liability of accident and mischance by getting the work privately printed. All but one or two of the maps had to go, and all the embellishments. But the text was safely set in type and so insured against loss. As the author bore the whole expense, his impression was limited to fifty copies; and one of the Leake MSS. in the British Museum gives us a rough idea as to how they were distributed. The author kept fifteen for himself, sent nine to Stationers' Hall, gave six to Oxford, Cambridge, and London, and presented twenty to friends and relatives. The original MS. was doubtless soiled and spoiled by the compositors, but its maps and decorations were excised by the author, who made use of them to grangerise his own corrected copy.

How many of the original fifty volumes survive at the present moment it is impossible to say. Apart from those in the British Museum and the Universities, I have examined two in the City of Manchester—one of them at the John Rylands' Library and the other at the Free Reference Library in Piccadilly. From these my own transcription has been prepared, and I desire to record my indebtedness to Mr. Sutton, librarian of the latter, for his kindness in allowing me to borrow the book and complete the arduous

labour of copying, at times and places convenient to myself.

Since completing my MS. I have been able to collate it with Garter King's own corrected copy, which happily survives as a treasured heirloom in the possession of Miss H. J. Lowe, the author's great-great-granddaughter. To her the Society is indebted for the loan of the original volume with its valuable annotations and pencil notes; and from the volume's maps and illustrations the plates for the present edition have been prepared.

The style of composition in the *Life of Sir John Leake* is often very crabbed and sometimes hopelessly ungrammatical. Where the omission of a word or a phrase is glaringly obvious, I have inserted square brackets in the text, and supplied what is missing at first in footnotes and afterwards within the square brackets themselves.

Conformably with the Society's rules, I have modernised the punctuation throughout, and in nearly all cases modernised the spelling. I have, however, left untouched just a few words, such as 'Warspight' and 'Mizzen,' which have recently come under discussion in the *Mariner's Mirror*, the journal of the 'Society for Nautical Research.' For my own part, I should have preferred to leave the spelling untouched throughout, because, as the O.E.D. shows, there is much to be gained from the growing science of comparative orthography. Our author, for example, always writes 'conveniencies,' and is perfectly justified in so doing: for the modern singular was unknown to him, and he always wrote 'conveniency.' The present edition would have gained in clearness, if italics had been permissible for the names of ships. Such a passage as, 'Man her out of the Humber and Cornwall in case the Prince should be with

him,' is, without italics, desperately ambiguous. Nobody could be certain whether the sentence referred to the names of vessels—or to a river, a county, and a king.

The book was not, in its first printed form, very successfully seen through the Press, and I have not thought it necessary to call attention to the numberless compositors' errors which were passed in 1750. The author himself collected two whole page-loads of corrigenda, but these by no means enumerate the total number of slips.

I have neglected one matter, because a thorough treatment would have made the book too bulky; and that is the matter of dates. Our author peppers them indiscriminately over his book without affording his readers any real chronological assistance. He speaks glibly of the '14th' or the '25th,' without any clue as to the month he means, and he leaps from O.S. to N.S., and from N.S. to O.S., in a manner which shows that he had never settled which was the better medium to use. I have tried to remove some of the time vagueness by the insertion of chapter-dates *seriatim*; and have only to add that, in translating styles, it is necessary to remember that the addition of eleven days is required to convert the Old into the New, and that where our author is not explicit, he is using the form to which his country still adhered,

I desire to tender my best thanks for much kind assistance to Mr. W. G. Perrin, Mr. R. G. Marsden, Rev. W. R. Martin-Leake, Mr. E. A. Price, Mr. M. A. Lewis, Miss E. G. R. Callender; and especially to Mr. Apsley Kennette, Town Clerk of Rochester, who very kindly had Sir John's portrait in the Guildhall taken down and photographed expressly for the present edition.



NOTE.—Since passing the proofs of this Introduction, I have, by the kindness of Mr. R. C. Anderson, F.S.A., been enabled to inspect the Sergison Manuscripts at Basset Holt, near Southampton. Charles Sergison was born in 1654 and began life at seventeen as a dockyard clerk. Four years later he took up the post of secretary to the Clerk of the Acts, and in 1689 became Clerk of the Acts himself. He presided at the Navy Office for thirty years, and won from all men unstinted applause for the excellence of his work. The emoluments of his office, including fees and perquisites, must have been considerable, for he soon had wealth sufficient to acquire the estate of Cuckfield Park in Sussex. Here he housed his fine collection of ship models, and here he accumulated the State Papers that happened to pass through his hands. His Manuscripts, which cover the whole period of Leake's active career, include seventy-six bound volumes of Navy Board minutes, thirteen of orders and patents, nine of lists of ships in sea pay; and, among many others, four bulky volumes of Miscellaneous Papers that look brimful of interest. The time will surely come when these mines of information will be asked to yield their treasure: but that will hardly be until historians recognize that the great Duke of Marlborough lived on an island; that the immense fabric of his fame was based on a maritime foundation; and that the work of the navy during the Spanish Succession War deserves a closer study than it has yet received: in other words, not until the subject of the present biography comes at long last into his own.

## AUTHOR'S PREFACE

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MY principal motive for undertaking the following work was to have a true and particular account of Sir John Leake's naval transactions ; to clear up some, which have been misrepresented, and to relate others, which have not been mentioned by our historians and naval writers. As it was chiefly intended for private information, I had no design to print it ; till recollecting the copy was liable to many accidents, which, at once, might render all I had done of no effect, I resolved to send it to the press, and accordingly have printed a few<sup>1</sup> copies, for the use of my family and friends. This much might therefore suffice by way of preface ; but, as whatever is printed, is in some measure published, and consequently will fall into other hands than those for whom it was intended, it may be proper I should say something more in relation to the work.

The subject is the life of an English Admiral ; a subject, indeed, not altogether so entertaining as some others, but as interesting as any, no actions being more for the honour and interest

<sup>1</sup> Fifty copies only.

of our country than naval achievements. Such, therefore, deserve to be recorded; not only to perpetuate the memory of them, but as examples for imitation; the histories of brave and virtuous actions raising an emulation in others to do the like. Mr. Boyer, in his *History of the Life and Reign of Queen Anne*, remarks that 'Providence was ever conspicuous in Sir John Leake's expeditions'; and he is usually mentioned under the distinguishing epithet of *The Brave and Fortunate*; to which, if we add his fidelity, disinterestedness, and public spirit, this age cannot give a brighter example for imitation.

As to the work itself, it is a narrative of facts, upon the incontestable evidence of original papers and other authentic proofs. If I may seem to bear a little hard sometimes upon particular persons, it is no more than truth required, and much less than I could have said, had I been disposed to censure the actions of others. To avoid this, I have omitted the parallel of Sir John with the admirals his contemporaries, which would have appeared greatly to his advantage, my design being only to do justice to him and discharge my obligation.



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# BOOK I





THE  
LIFE OF SIR JOHN LEAKE  
KT., ADMIRAL OF THE FLEET, ETC.

BOOK I

CHAPTER I

*His birth and transactions before he was made a Captain, with a brief account of the life and actions of his father, Captain Richard Leake.*

SIR JOHN LEAKE was son of Captain Richard Leake, Master-Gunner of England, and grandson of Mr. Richard Leake, descended from the Leakes of Derbyshire.

Mr. Leake the grandfather, being bred to the sea, took up his residence at Harwich, in the county of Essex, where his son Richard, the father of Sir John, was born in the year 1629. He is said to have been first in the King's service. However that be, he went into the service of the Parliament upon the breaking out of the Civil War, and had a commission in their fleet under the command of the Earl of Warwick, by which means his son was necessarily engaged in the same cause. But as he heartily detested it, he took the first opportunity to



desert it. He engaged some of the seamen in the same design, and, in the night, they went away with the boat. As his father suspected his design, he watched him so closely that he was discovered almost as soon as he put off from the ship, and several shots were fired at the boat to stop or sink it; but they got safely on shore, and Mr. Leake had the good fortune to escape his father's resentment, who would not have spared him, had he taken him, being very zealous in the cause he had espoused, and in which he died soon after.

After this escape, Mr. Leake went a volunteer in the King's service; but His Majesty's affairs proving very unfortunate, more especially by sea, he retired to Holland, and entered into the service of the Dutch artillery, where he improved himself in the art of Gunnery and Engineering, to which he had a particular genius.

As soon as it might be done with safety, he returned to England, and, entering into the Merchant Service, had the command of a ship several voyages up the Mediterranean; and during this time, his two elder sons Henry and John were born.

Upon the Restoration, he quitted the Merchant Service, and was made Gunner of a man-of-war, a post, though now esteemed but mean, at that time of good account. The sailing and the fighting were then two distinct affairs. The Master and his mates were to navigate the ship, and the Commission Officers and Gunner to fight the ship; and as the management of the great guns is the principal part of a sea engagement, the success was thought to depend very much upon the skill and conduct of the Gunner. For this reason, in case of the death of the

Commission Officers and Master, the Gunner had the command of the ship; and by these necessary qualifications, and the nature of his office, a Gunner was esteemed a genteel employment; and the Master-Gunners (for so they were always styled in their Warrant), especially those of great ships, wore their swords on shore, kept company with the Commission Officers, and were much respected by all.<sup>1</sup> A writer,<sup>2</sup> speaking of the economy of the Navy, observes that Gunners were better obeyed in those days than Lieutenants were in his, and had as much command over the seamen. And indeed, says he, they deserved it; for they were fit to command, and very often did it with great reputation; and instances some particular actions of Mr. Leake (which follow) as a proof of the qualifications of Gunners at that time.

The first ship of which Mr. Leake was appointed Master-Gunner, was the Princess, of

<sup>1</sup> 'No officer, but his Captain, is accommodated like him. He challengeth the Gun Room as his hereditary estate where he struts about like any crow in a gutter. . . . He ruleth by the Sword like any usurper; nay and so horrid a tyrant is he as to keep it ever unsheathed and never lets it rust or lie dormant in a scabbard. This is his "Sword of State" which never goes forth from his dominions. But he wears another on shore more by the instigations of his wife than his own heart. . . . When he has this swagging by his Quarter and his bob-wig tied up behind like a horse-tail, he's then a Gentleman all over in his own conceit, though Heaven knows the vain fool's no more like one than a Barber's Pole is like a Whipping Post.'—THE GUNNER by Ned Ward in *The Wooden World Dissected* (1706).

It is worthy of notice that in Monson's day the Gunner was drawing smaller pay than the Boatswain.—*Naval Tracts*, Book III.

<sup>2</sup> A pamphlet, entitled *The Old and True Way of Manning the Fleet; or, How to retrieve the Glory of the English Arms by Sea*. Quarto, London, 1707.—*Author's Note*.

50 guns, in which he continued till May 3, 1669.<sup>1</sup> During this time, which included the first Dutch War,<sup>2</sup> he was in many engagements and always distinguished himself by his skill and bravery. 'It was in this war that the Princess, meeting with fifteen sail of Rotterdam men-of-war,<sup>3</sup> fought with the Rear-Admiral of 64 guns and five others of 48 and 50 guns each, and presently after with the Admiral of 70 guns, and two of her seconds, forcing the enemy to lie by the lee; and the Captain, Lieutenants, and Master, being all killed during the battle, the extraordinary defence of the ship was entirely owing to the bravery and conduct of the Gunner.<sup>4</sup>

Likewise in another engagement, in the same ship, in the year 1667, in the Baltic Sea, he gained no less honour to himself; for engaging two Danish men-of-war, after four hours' fight, his Captain being killed, the Lieutenant

<sup>1</sup> Built by Daniel Furzer in 1660. She was a Fourth Rate of 660 tons and mounted 46 guns.—Pepys's *Register of the Royal Navy*, Pepysian MSS. 2940.

<sup>2</sup> Meaning the 'first' of the Restoration wars against the Dutch; what is now called the 'Second Dutch War,' 1665–1668.

<sup>3</sup> That is to say, furnished by the Admiralty of 'South Holland.'

<sup>4</sup> *The Old and True Way of Manning the Fleet, &c.*, f. 15, where this and the following action are related of Mr. Leake. These two actions are likewise mentioned in *Columna Rostrata* but said to be done by the Elizabeth, Captain Dawes, which is a mistake; because at the time of both these engagements Captain Dawes commanded the Princess, and Mr. Leake was Gunner, as appears by the Pay-Books of that ship in the Navy Office. Besides, in the latter engagement she is called a 'Frigate,' whereas the Elizabeth was a ship of 70 guns. The Princess indeed might be called a frigate, her complement of men at that time being but 220, though she mounted 46 or 50 guns.—*Author's Note.*



desperately wounded, and the Master slain, he took the command and plied the Danes so warmly, that they were both glad to sheer off with the loss of abundance of their men. However, they anchored about a mile from him all night, repairing their damage, as Mr. Leake did likewise on his part expecting to renew the fight next day; but either they were not able, or durst not do it; for, in the morning, though they were to windward, instead of bearing down upon him, they kept fast at anchor. Whereupon Mr. Leake, having saluted each of them with a shot of defiance, bore away for England. He expected to be made Captain of her, as he well deserved; but he was disappointed, another person being made Captain before he came home. But, upon his arrival, His Royal Highness the Duke of York, then Lord High Admiral, was pleased to sign the following warrant in his favour.

*James Duke of York and Albany, Earl of Ulster, Lord High Admiral of England and Ireland, &c.*

Whereas I am informed, that Richard Leake, Master-Gunner of His Majesty's ship the Princess, did, in a late engagement with two Danish men-of-war, wherein all his superior officers were slain and wounded, behave himself with very commendable courage and valour, as well in fighting the enemy as preserving the said ship: these are therefore to will and require you, forthwith, to cause a bill to be made forth for the sum of thirty pounds, to be paid as His Majesty's free-gift, to the said Richard Leake, for his good service, until opportunity offer for his further preferment. Given under my hand at St. James's, June 8, 1667.

JAMES.

To the Principal Officers and Commissioners  
of His Majesty's Navy.

Likewise by warrant from the Commissioners

executing the offices of His Majesty's Ordnance, bearing date the 13th day of August, 1667, he was appointed one of His Majesty's Gunners within the Tower of London, in consideration (as the warrant expresses it) 'of his good and faithful service to His Majesty during the war, with the French, Danes, and Dutch, both by sea and land'; by which it appears he had served in the Army as well as the Navy, though the particulars of his land service have not come to our knowledge.

Notwithstanding Mr. Leake's merits and qualifications, and the Duke of York's favour and recommendation for preferment, he continued Gunner of the Princess till May 1669, and about that time was promoted to be Gunner of the Royal Prince, a First Rate ship, wherein he had the good fortune to distinguish himself in a most extraordinary manner; of which action, as one of the most remarkable of the kind that ever happened, Sir Jacob Acworth, the present Surveyor of the Navy, has a painting, taken from a drawing of Mr. John Leake's (afterwards Sir John) in the possession of Samuel Percival, Secretary of the Navy.

The engagement that gave birth to this action, was the last great sea fight between the English and Dutch, August 10, 1673.<sup>1</sup> The brave Sir Edward Spragge hoisted his flag that day on board the Royal Prince. He is said to have promised the King to bring him the Dutch Admiral, Van Tromp, alive or dead, or perish in the attempt. Accordingly he singled him out, and engaged him desperately for three hours. The ships were not able to stand the shock. Van Tromp was first obliged to leave

<sup>1</sup> The Battle of the Texel, August 11, 1673.

and lastly, by Patent dated May 21, 1677, had a grant, for life, of the office of Master-Gunner of England, being likewise appointed Storekeeper of his Majesty's Ordnance and Stores of War at Woolwich. Accordingly he removed from Whitehall to the Warren House at Woolwich, where he lived, and, as the writer before-mentioned observes,<sup>1</sup> discharged his office with great reputation till the day of his death. Both these preferments were the more extraordinary, because they were in the disposal of the Master-General of the Ordnance, and always given to Engineers bred in the Army ; whereas Mr. Leake was properly a seaman, and therefore his extraordinary qualifications only could have procured, or even justified, this preference to him, in injury, no doubt, to other engineers, who had more regular pretensions to it : and for the same reason he attended the Lord Dartmouth to Tangier, in the year 1683, to demolish the fortifications of that town.

Being now in the station of Master-Gunner of England, he had full scope for his genius. His invention was perpetually at work, and he had indeed a surprising one in all manner of fiery productions, so as to excel all the engineers of his time. He had frequent trials of his skill with French and Dutch gunners and engineers, in the Warren at Woolwich, at which King Charles and the Duke of York were often present ; and he never failed to baffle all his competitors. Nor was he less skilled in pyrotechny, or the art of making all kinds of compositions of fire-works, of which likewise he made frequent trials, with equal success ; and indeed, he made some

<sup>1</sup> *The Old and True Way of Manning the Fleet, &c.*



very great and useful improvements, if the art of destroying mankind may be so called. For, he first contrived to fire a Mortar by the blast of the piece, which has ever since been used, but before was done with great hazard, by setting fire to the fusee first, and then to the mortar.<sup>1</sup> He was likewise the principal contriver of what the French called *Infernals*,<sup>2</sup> used at the bombardment of St. Malo in the year 1693, of which Father Daniel and De Larrey<sup>3</sup> in their histories give a particular description. But what is most to our purpose, is, his invention of the cushee-piece,<sup>4</sup> so called, because intended to be placed on the forecastle of a ship, as a piece of that name is placed in a Galley; but instead of shot, was to fire shells and carcasses.<sup>5</sup> This was a favourite invention of Captain Leake's; and having answered his designs in theory, he only wanted to put it in practice, but unfortunately it was a time of peace. However, it was not long before an opportunity offered, for King James being under great apprehensions of an invasion from Holland, resolved to fit out a strong fleet, and Captain Leake took that

<sup>1</sup> In days when the heavy gun discharged a solid iron ball, the mortar fired a 'shell' which was exploded by a time fuse. Our author means to say that, prior to Richard Leake's invention, there were frequent accidents because the match of the fuse had to be ignited before the shell was put into the gun.

<sup>2</sup> Explosion vessels; cp. Dundonald's *Autobiography of a Seaman*, vol. i, pp. 368-9.

<sup>3</sup> Father Daniel, *Histoire de la milice française*. De Larrey, *Histoire de France sous Louis XIV.*

<sup>4</sup> Afterwards known as the 'Sea Mortar' or 'Bomb.'

<sup>5</sup> A 'carcass' was properly an incendiary shell, i.e., an iron cylinder pierced with holes and filled with combustibles to set buildings on fire.

occasion to propose the trial of his cushee-piece. It was readily granted ; the Firedrake fireship was ordered for that service ; and, for the better execution of it, his son John was appointed commander, whose life and actions are to be the subject of what follows.

Mr. John Leake was born at Rotherhithe, in Surrey, in June 1656. Being well instructed in Mathematics and Gunnery by his father, he entered very early into the Navy, and was a Midshipman some time before the conclusion of the last Dutch War, and was in that memorable engagement, wherein his father had the honour to signalise himself in so extraordinary a manner, and himself had no inconsiderable share. The war being at an end, and there being but little hopes of preferment in the Navy in time of peace, Mr. Leake engaged in the Merchant Service, and was commander of a ship two or three voyages up the Mediterranean ; but having a military genius, and notions of honour inconsistent with trade, he resolved to quit the Mercantile life the first opportunity ; or rather, went into that service, to continue in it no longer, than till preferment offered in the Navy. When the father was promoted, it was a natural gradation for the son to succeed him ; so when one was made Captain of a yacht, the other was made Gunner of the Neptune, the best preferment he could hope for at that time, there being but few Commission Officers employed in time of peace ; and none had then half-pay but Captains who in the late war had commanded First and Second Rates. All other unemployed were starving, or under the necessity of seeking bread in the Merchant Service ; whereas a Gunner was in constant whole-pay,

though he never went out of harbour ; and Master-Gunner of a great ship, as I have observed, was a post of much greater reputation at that time than it has been esteemed since. For these reasons he had refused to be a Lieutenant. And because he was well assured of promotion to a command from the post of Gunner, he was besides one of the Master-Gunner's Mates, and by his behaviour in both stations, gained the good-will and esteem of all that knew him, so that not only upon his father's account, but his own, he had many friends. The times indeed proved very unfavourable for naval promotions, which made him continue in the station of Gunner much longer than he expected ; and therefore the trial of his father's cushee-piece was made use of as a means for his preferment. Accordingly he received a commission to command the Firedrake fireship, dated September 24, 1688. But this was unhappily attended with the death of his younger and only brother Edward, who was blown up at Woolwich, as he was preparing the composition of the cushee-shells.



## CHAPTER II <sup>1</sup>

*The state of the Navy from the time of Queen Elizabeth to King James II, with the circumstances and proceedings of the fleet at the Revolution.*

BEFORE I bring Captain Leake into action and enter upon the war with France which raised our naval glory so high, it will not be amiss to premise the state and progress of the British Navy to that time. The Royal Navy, considered as a standing military force by sea, is but of modern date. Queen Elizabeth, indeed, made a great figure in the world as a maritime power, and her long and prosperous reign pro-

<sup>1</sup> The modern student desiring to obtain a reliable survey of the state of the Navy between the death of Queen Elizabeth and the landing of William of Orange would not resort to the pages of a biography written in 1750 by Garter King at Arms. It is therefore unnecessary to annotate or comment at length upon this chapter. Its contents are valuable to-day only as showing what a well-informed man could discover in mid-eighteenth-century and how far his views were coloured by ignorance or predilection.

Most commendable is our author's reliance on Monson and Pepys, and most praiseworthy his historic sketch in its main outlines. But in his treatment of the period that followed 'King Charles's Martyrdom' the Pre-Carlylean attitude declares itself, and the naval reformations of the Commonwealth period are with unwitting injustice fathered on the monarchs whose neglect made those reformations necessary.

duced many brave and experienced sea-officers. Yet she had not what may properly be called a Navy ; for, at her death<sup>1</sup> she left but thirty sail from 200 to 1000 tons (and of the latter two only) requiring to man them all 7920 men ; and it must be observed, that to make out this number of men, each ship had more men and fewer guns, in proportion to their burthen, than they had afterwards. These, with the assistance of some merchant ships, were sufficient for the time she lived in : for having overcome the Spaniard, the then greatest maritime power, she had little to fear ; but however found it necessary to keep a certain number of ships of her own against all emergencies. By this, and other prudent measures, she may be said to have laid the foundation of the naval power, which all her successors wisely improved. King James I added to the Navy three Second Rates, the *St. George*, the *Triumph*, and the *Union*, which remained upon the establishment of Second Rates even at the Revolution. His son, King Charles I, besides a Third Rate ship, added the *Royal Sovereign*, the biggest First Rate in England, even then or afterwards, till the building of the *Britannia* in the year 1682 ; and these two Princes together, added about twenty sail of lesser ships, which we know of ; and, no doubt, many others that have not come to our knowledge, which were destroyed or worn out in the Dutch Wars. King Charles I likewise settled the wages of the officers and seamen, and made other regulations, from whence it may well deserve the denomination of a Navy Royal ; that is, a standing force of ships of war,

<sup>1</sup> Sir William Monson, *Naval Tracts*, N.R.S. Edition, vol. ii, p. 235.

regularly disciplined, and ready upon all occasions to oppose a foreign force: though, even yet, it continued a practice to join Merchant Ships with some of the King's, upon every expedition where a number of ships were required; but the reason of this seems to be, that in these undertakings the merchants joined as Adventurers, and bore part of the charges of the voyage, and sometimes the whole expense was theirs and the persons employed in it, the King only countenancing the whole by his commission and some few of his ships.

After King Charles's martyrdom and during the confusion that followed, the Dutch, having outstripped us in trade and navigation and becoming rich and proud, disputed the sovereignty of the sea; for though they had yielded that point to the Monarchy of Britain, yet, as Commonwealths, they were the elder sister. This produced wars and increased our Navy in proportion to theirs; for, besides what were lost and decayed, there remained at the conclusion of the Dutch War, one Second Rate, eight Third Rates, twenty-six Fourth Rates, six Fifth Rates, and one Sixth Rate built by the Commonwealth. But the greatest addition of strength the Navy received was after the Restoration of King Charles II, in the Wars with Holland, wherein he built seven First Rates, two Second Rates, ten Third Rates, sixteen Fourth Rates, five Fifth Rates, and six Sixth Rates. After the war in 1674 the Parliament, considering the condition of the Navy, and the necessity of a standing Naval Power to maintain the honour and the trade of the nation, granted a large sum of money, for an additional force of thirty capital ships, which were accordingly built. The state of the Navy, for the time we have been speaking



of, may be seen, at one view, by the following scheme.

At the death of Queen Elizabeth were 38 ships, viz.

Tons		equivalent by Tonnage to	{	5	Second Rates
5	of 900 and 1000			5	Third Rates
5	of 700 and 800			12	Fourth Rates
12	from 300 to 700			8	Fifth Rates
8	from 200 to 300			8	Sixth Rates
8	from 40 to 120				

*A Scheme of the Navy, anno 1684*

	Guns	By whom built	Number	Tons
First Rates	90	Charles I	1	1545
	to	Charles II	7	1107 to 1441
	100	Do. by Act of Parl.	1	1739
Second Rates	80	James I	3	845-900
	to	Commonwealth	1	1020
	90	Charles II	2	1050 and 1029
		Do. by Act of Parl.	9	1273 to 1546
Third Rates	60	Charles I	1	727
	to	Commonwealth	8	704 to 809
	80	Charles II	10	813 to 1107
		Do. by Act of Parl.	20	1032 to 1174
Fourth Rates	40	Commonwealth	26	372 to 676
	to	Charles II	16	345 to 722
Fifth Rates	20	Commonwealth	6	223 to 294
	to	Charles II	5	234 to 346
Sixth Rates	20	Commonwealth	1	151
	and under	Charles II	6	33 to 199
		Total . . .	123	

This was the Navy King James found at his accession to the crown; but the condition of some of them was very bad, having been so neglected the latter part of King Charles's reign, that many even of the thirty last built ships were rotten and ready to sink at their moorings. One of the first, and best things therefore King James did, was to redress the ill state of the Navy: and he used the only effectual means for that purpose, by taking the Admiralty affairs into his own hands, by which means, by October 1688, as Mr. Pepys<sup>1</sup> informs us, he had a fleet at sea of 40 sail of the line, 11 frigates, and 20 fireships; and the rest repaired, or under repair.<sup>2</sup> By this extraordinary care of the Navy it appears King James depended very much upon it; and, indeed, having been much in the fleet, and so often commanding it, he might well have been thought to have had the best interest there; but, as Bishop Burnet observes,<sup>3</sup> he found all the great seamen, by a tincture in their education, averse to Popery and lovers of liberty. Therefore he began, very early, the method of sending pages of honour, and young persons of quality, to sea, who were made commanders before they were qualified. Popish priests were likewise introduced into the fleet, and most preferments given to Roman Catholics. By this means, the old seamen, being discouraged, left the Navy. And though the Earl of Dartmouth carried as strict a command as

<sup>1</sup> *Memoirs relating to the state of the Navy*, pp. 132, 139.

<sup>2</sup> For the state of the Navy at the accession and abdication of James II see schedules printed from the Leake papers (Brit. Mus. Add. MSS. 5439) in Appendices A and B to *The Life of Captain Stephen Martin*, N.R.S., vol. v.

<sup>3</sup> In his character of King James when Duke of York.

he durst at so critical a conjuncture, he could not restrain the rough seamen, who threatened to throw the priests overboard; being privately set on by the Protestant officers who knew what was doing.

This was the state and situation of the fleet, when Captain Leake, pursuant to his orders, joined the fleet at the Nore under the command of the Lord Dartmouth. And soon after, the rest of the ships being come to the rendez-vous, they all proceeded to the Gunfleet, to oppose the Prince of Orange in his passage. When they came to the Gunfleet, his Lordship called a council of war, and some of King James's friends proposed to go over to the coast of Holland and wait the coming out of the Dutch fleet. This indeed would have done the business, but by a great majority of the captains it was resolved to continue where they were; for, previous to this council of war, the Protestant captains had privately agreed it was more advisable to avoid meeting the Dutch fleet, than be put to the necessity of revolting to them upon their coming to action. As they acted under King James's commissions, they chose to avoid the imputation of being the first to desert him, waiting till the Prince of Orange was landed. And indeed, had they acted otherwise, it might have had fatal effects, and overthrown the whole design. In the meantime the wind that kept them fast at the Gunfleet, carried the Prince of Orange to the desired port. However, as soon as they could follow them they did, and in a few days came off of Torbay where the Dutch fleet lay. But presently a storm of wind arose, that forced the English fleet out of the Channel; and by the time they



returned, the Prince of Orange was landed ; and all things favouring his designs, the Lord Dartmouth sailed with the fleet to the Downs. Upon their arrival there, the Roman Catholic officers were dismissed ; and the rest joined in an address to the Prince and Princess of Orange.<sup>1</sup> The ships were ordered into harbour and Mr. Leake proceeded with the Firedrake to Chatham.

<sup>1</sup> For a fuller account of these occurrences see *Memoirs relating to the Lord Torrington*, Camden Society's Publications, vol. xlvi, pp. 23-36.

### CHAPTER III

*Captain Leake's proceedings in the year 1689, the battle of Bantry Bay, and the Relief of Londonderry.*

KING JAMES having abdicated the kingdom, and the Prince and Princess of Orange having been declared King and Queen by the Convention of Lords and Commons, February 13, 1688-9, the next step to be taken was to put King William into a condition to oppose all attempts to restore King James; for the King of France, making the cause of King James the cause of religion and the common cause of kings, resolved to use his whole power to restore him. For this end, before affairs could be settled in England, he dispatched King James from Brest, with a considerable number of French troops, to land in Ireland, and secure that kingdom; and this had the more probability of success by reason of the number of Papists there, who would join him out of a principle of religion. Intelligence of this being laid before the Parliament, preparations were made with great diligence to equip a squadron to prevent the French from executing their design; and Admiral Herbert was appointed to command it. But long before he sailed, King James landed at Kinsale; wherefore, getting together in haste

what ships he could,<sup>1</sup> of which the Firedrake, Captain Leake, was one, he made for the coast of Ireland, in hopes, at least, to intercept the convoy in their return ; ordering the rest of the ships to follow him to the rendez-vous, which was the coast of Ireland, or ten leagues west of Scilly.

Arriving before Cork the 17th of April, they heard that King James had landed two months before, and that the convoy was returned to Brest for a further supply. Upon this intelligence they proceeded off Brest and into the Soundings in quest of them ; but, not meeting them, they returned to the Irish coast, and on the 29th discovered the French fleet off of Kinsale. They followed them all the next day, and in the evening saw them standing into Bantry Bay, consisting of 28 men-of-war, from 60 to 70 guns and upwards, and 5 fireships, commanded by Monsieur Châteaurenault, and a fleet of transports, which had landed 5000 men. The English fleet lay by all night off the bay ; and the next morning by daybreak, being the 1st of May, they stood towards the French, having but 18 ships of the line, viz. 8 Third Rates, and 10 Fourth Rates, the Dartmouth frigate of 40 guns, and the Firedrake fireship. The French, encouraged by their superiority, presently got under sail and bore down upon the English, but would not engage so close as Admiral Herbert endeavoured to do. However, they maintained a distant fight till five in the afternoon, when they tacked and stood further into the bay. The English, being most of them disabled from further action, could not follow them ; but the Admiral con-

<sup>1</sup> *Memoirs relating to the Lord Torrington*, p. 37.



tinued some time after before the bay ; and then repaired to the rendez-vous to meet the rest of his squadron, having acquired honour enough to have maintained a fight so long against an enemy double his force, and this with the loss only of one captain, one lieutenant, and about ninety-four seamen killed, and two hundred and fifty wounded : (amongst the latter of whom was Mr. Martin, afterwards Sir John Leake's brother-in-law and Captain, who had his thigh broke by a cannon-ball, being then a Midshipman on board Captain Shovell). King William was so sensible of it, that when he received the news of this sea-fight, he is reported to have said that such an action was necessary in the beginning of a war, but it would be rash in the course of it. Indeed it was esteemed so signal, that, when the fleet returned to Spithead, King William himself went to Portsmouth, and distributed honours and rewards to every officer and seaman that had been in the battle ; Captain John Ashby of the *Defiance* and Captain Clowdisley Shovell of the *Edgar* were knighted, and the Admiral was created Earl of Torrington.<sup>1</sup>

In this engagement, Captain Leake, though in a fireship only, had the reputation of doing very signal service ; for by means of the cushee-

<sup>1</sup> For the battle of Bantry Bay see *Memoirs relating to the Lord Torrington*, pp. 36-8, and *Life of Stephen Martin*, pp. 7-10. Père Hoste in his *Evolutions Navales*, p. 54, quotes the success of Châteaurenault as illustrating the advantage of the leeward berth ; and it is not improbable that here for the first time the French adopted their characteristic tactics, firing at long range with intent to dismast, and then retiring before the wind. The English critics of the affray agree that Torrington (with the smaller fleet) tried in vain to close with his opponents ; but they assume that his disability arose from the fact that the French were unassailably drawn up to windward.

piece he set one of the French ships on fire during the battle, commanded by the Chevalier Coëtlogon, whereby part of her was blown up, and she narrowly missed being wholly consumed. Father Daniel<sup>1</sup>, speaking of this engagement says, it was by a cannon-ball, not knowing what it was, nothing of that nature having been used before; but it wholly disabled her from further service; and several other ships received damage by the same means. The Admiral was very sensible of the service Captain Leake had performed, and two days after the battle gave him a commission to command the Dartmouth frigate.

The battle of Bantry Bay was the first opportunity Captain Leake had to try his father's cushee-piece; and it seems to have answered so well, as to have done honour to the inventor. But whether he thought it too desperate and destructive to be brought into use, or hating it for his brother's sake, who lost his life by it, it is certain he did not recommend it; and I do not find it was ever used afterwards.<sup>2</sup>

During these naval transactions, King James's party in Ireland having secured the most important places, and disarmed, plundered, and imprisoned the Protestants in the south of Ireland, they retired to their brethren in Ulster, who had declared for King William and Queen Mary, and seized the towns of Kilmore, Coleraine, Enniskillen, and Londonderry, and even made a show of opposing King James's forces; but being defeated, the loss of Coleraine and Kilmore

<sup>1</sup> *Histoire de la milice française.*

<sup>2</sup> On the contrary, the bomb-ketch from this time became a feature in every British fleet. Only the name 'Cushee-piece' disappeared; cp. below, pp. 64, 147, 154, 159, &c.; &c.

soon followed ; and on the 20th April, Londonderry, their capital, was invested by an army of 30,000 men.

The Protestant city of Londonderry (so called from the Londoners who built and planted it) is situate in the north of Ireland at the bottom of Lough Foyle, upon a small navigable river, which discharges itself into the Lough, about three miles from the city, and fifteen from the sea ; the mouth of the river being defended by a fort, called Culmore Castle. As soon as it was invested, they had a general pardon offered them, if they would surrender, and even a Carte Blanche, signed by King James, to insert their own terms. But they rejected both ; which brave proceeding so enraged the French general, Monsieur Rosen, that he drove 7000 Protestants under the city walls, in order to starve them, where they must have famished, had not the garrison erected a gallows, and threatened to hang all the prisoners they had taken during the siege.

Though the Duke of Berwick<sup>1</sup> saw that his utmost efforts could not put a stop to the advantages of the besieged, yet he hoped the army might still reduce the place if he could hinder any succour from entering it. For this purpose, as the besieged could only be relieved from the river, he lined both sides of it with 2000 musketeers, and contrived in the narrow part, a little above Culmore Castle, where the ships which were to come to their relief must pass, a *Stoccado*, being a boom<sup>2</sup> of timber, joined by iron chains, and strengthened by a cable

<sup>1</sup> *Life of the Duke of Berwick* (from the French) (London. 8vo. 1738), *passim*.

<sup>2</sup> 'Bomb,' author's spelling.



of twelve inches thickness twisted round it. And at each end thereof were redoubts with heavy cannon; and they had likewise sunk several boats, and drove stockades with spikes into the river, so that the whole seemed impenetrable.

This was the state of Londonderry, when Captain Leake, two days after the battle of Bantry Bay, was dispatched to hasten the recruits for their relief, which were to embark at Liverpool. The same day therefore that he entered upon his command of the Dartmouth he left the fleet, and proceeding up the Irish Channel, the 17th arrived at Hoylake,<sup>1</sup> near Liverpool, where he found the Swallow man-of-war and the transports with the soldiers on board. They were detained here by contrary winds till the 23rd, when they endeavoured to sail; but the wind shifting again contrary with very bad weather, they could not sail till the 31st.

There was one of the victuallers with provisions at the Isle of Man. Captain Leake therefore left the fleet under the care of the Swallow, and went thither to bring her from thence. Soon after he left the fleet, it blew so hard he was forced to lie under a main course. When it cleared up, he pursued his course along the shore of that island, looking into Douglas Bay, and after into Ramsey Bay, in which last place he found his convoy; and with her, the 8th of June, he joined the Grand Fleet, under the command of Sir George Rooke in Red Bay.<sup>2</sup> The next day the whole fleet sailed towards the coast of Derry, but were forced to Rathlin Bay,

<sup>1</sup> 'Hyle-lake,' author's spelling.

<sup>2</sup> Lat. 55.10 N., Long. 6.0 W.

where sending the boats ashore, they brought off a hundred head of cattle.

When the fleet arrived with the forces off of Lough Foyle, the Admiral ordered Captain Leake, with the Dartmouth, Greyhound, and Kingfisher ketch, to join the land-forces under Major-General Kirke, it being found impracticable to relieve the town but by sea, and these ships being the smallest, were most proper to go up the river ; and the King had before ordered the Swallow upon the same service ; and four sails were stationed off the harbour's mouth, to assist and secure them from any attempts of the enemy by sea.

The 16th, Captain Leake run up the Lough, the Swallow and merchant ships following him, and came to an anchor about a mile and a half below Culmore Castle ; and being so near the place, the General held a council of war on board the Swallow ; and considering how the enemy had blocked up and secured the river, it was judged impracticable for the ships to force a passage to the town, and resolved to stay till their force was augmented ; and then by making a descent, to endeavour to oblige the enemy to raise the siege.

In the meantime the land-forces possessed themselves of the island of Inch, in Lough Swilly, a little to the westward of Lough Foyle, and secured the pass from the island to the main by two redoubts and a battery of cannon ; on each side of which the Greyhound, and Kingfisher ketch, were moored ; and then Sir George Rooke sailed from his station on that coast in quest of some French ships that had taken two English vessels and were gone to the Isle of Mull with forces ; whither he proceeded, but not time enough to prevent their landing.

All this while the besieged were weakened by a raging famine, having lived some time upon hides, dogs, and cats, horseflesh, tallow, and such like. And though in this dismal scene of distress, many bold attempts were made by those in the town to reach the ships for a supply, they were intercepted by the enemy; and, as it had been judged impracticable to force a passage to the town, there remained only to perish miserably, or submit to their enraged and merciless enemies, which was worse than death. But Providence provided them a deliverer in Captain Leake. He was sensibly touched with their sufferings, and resolved to attempt their relief, though he could have no other man-of-war to assist him, the *Swallow*, which was the only one there, being too large to go up the river; only he borrowed the *Swallow's* long-boat to be assistant in cutting the boom.

Having well concerted beforehand what was to be done, he agreed with the commanders of the two victuallers, upon the manner of the attack: that he leading the van, should engage the castle and batteries, whilst they, in the meantime, should pass by and run with full sail against the boom, in order to break it. And the boats being well manned and prepared for the work, were immediately to join them, and use their best endeavours to cut the boom asunder, and haul the ships through; and the evening was judged most proper to make the attack. These dispositions were no sooner made than carried into execution; and, about seven in the evening of the same day, being the 28th of July, Captain Leake got under sail with the *Dartmouth*, and made towards the river, followed by the victuallers, viz. the *Mountjoy* of Derry and the *Phoenix* of



Coleraine, but under the great disadvantage of having but little wind to enable them to pass the batteries, or carry them with any force against the boom. But the circumstances of the town would not admit of any delay.

Whilst these measures were taking for their relief, the Rev. Mr. Walker, their Governor, was preaching to the garrison, encouraging them by the many instances of divine Providence shown to them since the beginning of the siege, to hope for a speedy deliverance ; and, as if it had been prophetically spoken, about an hour after sermon, they discovered Captain Leake with the victuallers coming to their relief.

The enemy made a most furious fire upon the Dartmouth from Culmore Castle and the batteries, which was received and returned with great bravery ; but having passed the castle, the little wind they had had failed them, and a dead calm succeeded, so that the victuallers stopping at the boom, but not having force to break it, recoiled, and the Mountjoy run stern-foremost on shore. Upon this, the enemies, gathering in swarms to the water-side, gave the loudest and most joyful shouts, crying out our ships were taken ; at the same time firing their great and small shot, and preparing their boats to board her ; which, however, was not to be done so easily as they imagined. The trouble and concern of the besieged, who plainly saw what passed from the walls of the town, to see their last hopes disappointed, is not to be expressed ; but by great providence, the Mountjoy firing her guns, the shock loosened her so that by the help of the rising tide she got clear, though with the loss of Mr. Browning her commander, who was killed by the enemy's shot. In the meantime, the cannon of the Dart-

mouth had done great execution against the batteries, some of their guns being dismounted, and the men hardly able to stand to those that were not; and whilst the enemy were exulting with joy for the success they seemed to have over the Mountjoy, the boats' crews got upon the boom, cut it asunder and hauled the Phoenix through;<sup>1</sup> and soon after the Mountjoy followed, Captain Leake continuing the fight till he saw they had both got in safety to the city, to the inconceivable joy and transport of a garrison, which reckoned only upon two days' life, nothing being left for their subsistence but nine lean horses and a pint of meal to each man, having sustained a siege of one hundred and eleven days.

This brave and successful undertaking, in spite of all the enemy's works to prevent it, and in sight of an army of 30,000 men, was performed with inconsiderable loss. This so discouraged the enemy, that on the last day of July they raised the siege in the night, with great confusion; and in their retreat, for revenge of the disappointment, blew up Culmore Castle, and made a miserable havoc of the country. If we may believe the French writers,<sup>2</sup> 7000 Protestants were famished to death in the city during the siege; however that be, it is certain the loss of the enemy was greater, and could not be less than between eight and nine thousand men; for they acknowledge<sup>3</sup> to have lost a great number of

<sup>1</sup> Macaulay, chapter xii, gives the credit of breaking the boom to the Phoenix and makes no mention of the part played by the boats' crews in hacking a way through. This omission was detected and rectified by Richard Bagwell in the third volume of his *Ireland under the Stuarts*.

<sup>2</sup> Father Daniel and the writer of the *Life of the Duke of Berwick*.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

officers and soldiers. Major-General Kirke, who saw the attack from on board the *Swallow*, was so highly pleased with the conduct and bravery of this action, that he gave Captain Leake a company in his own regiment, which he enjoyed many years, even after he was a Flag-Officer.

If the relieving the Protestant city of Londonderry from Popery and slavery was a great and glorious action, the happy consequences attending it were still greater with regard to the Public. It broke the spirit of King James's army to meet with such resistance and to lose so much time and the flower of their army in the beginning of their Irish conquests before one town, and at last be obliged to draw off with shame and confusion. At the same time it encouraged the Protestants by the example of Londonderry to hold out to the last extremity, since there were not wanting brave spirits, who would run the greatest hazards, and attempt things judged impracticable in the glorious cause of Liberty. This success likewise gave new life to the intended expedition from England, which waited the event of the siege; for had Londonderry surrendered to King James, all Ireland had gone with it (there being only this city and Enniskillen in the hands of the Protestants); and then it would have been too late to have made a descent from England with any probability of success.

In memory of this action, a medal was struck by the Dutch exhibiting the bust of King William upon a pedestal, and two figures representing England and Holland supporting a crown of laurel over his head; at a distance the city of Londonderry; and this inscription upon the pedestal, 'WILHELMUS MAXIMUS IN BELGICA LIBERATOR IN BRITANNIA RESTAURATOR'; under-



neath 'LONDONDERRY, 1689.' And the same has likewise been commemorated in the new tapestry of the House of Peers in Ireland, as one of the most remarkable events attending that kingdom at the Revolution. This tapestry is inscribed 'THE GLORIOUS DEFENCE OF LONDONDERRY,' representing a view of the city besieged and three ships (viz. the Dartmouth and the two victuallers) lying near the town as having brought the relief they wanted ; the whole encompassed by a broad border adorned with festoons and military trophies. On the upper part of the border the picture of the Governor subscribed 'Major Baker Governor.' On the side four medallions, the first exhibiting the bust of a clergyman inscribed 'Dr. Walker'; the second the bust of an officer inscribed the 'Captain of the Dartmouth'<sup>1</sup>; the third a representation of the ships breaking the boom inscribed 'The Breaking of the Boom'; the fourth an engagement between two horsemen inscribed 'In Single Combat; the French General killed by C.M.' At the bottom the arms of the city circumscribed 'Victoria, Vita, Veritas.'

<sup>1</sup> On the back of the interpolated page which mounts his map of the 'North Part of Ireland' the author has added in his own copy; the following MS. note, 'The tapestry being put up so many years after the action, they did not then know the Captain's name.'

## CHAPTER IV

*Proceedings with the Grand Fleet in the years 1690 and 1691 ;  
with the trial of the Earl of Torrington.*

THE same day the Dartmouth was paid off Captain Leake was appointed to command the Oxford, a Fourth Rate of 54 guns, then in Portsmouth harbour. He had no sooner received his commission, than he hastened to his ship to fit her with all expedition for the sea. Which having completed, he sailed the 5th of September to Spithead. But he was no sooner anchored than a violent storm arose, wherein he was in great danger ; for though he rode fast himself, a large Dutch man-of-war, driving on board him, broke his bowsprit, sprung his foremast, beat in his cat-head, and otherwise very much damaged the ship ; so that as soon as the storm was over, he was obliged to go into the harbour again to refit. He continued no longer than to repair the damage he had received, and then joined the fleet at Spithead, bound to the Mediterranean, under the command of Vice-Admiral Killigrew.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Our author assumes in his readers a knowledge of the following facts ; that the French intended in 1690 to combine their Brest and Toulon fleets ; that Killigrew was dispatched to bar the way to the Mediterranean squadron but unluckily failed to do so ; that the French were able in consequence to mass their naval forces in the Channel ; that

They weighed from Spithead the 3rd of February, and two days after arrived at Plymouth. Leaving that place the 25th with the trade, the next day they joined Admiral Russell in Torbay, with the fleet under his command, bound to the Groyne<sup>1</sup> with the Queen of Spain.<sup>2</sup> The two fleets weighed from thence next morning, but were forced back again the same day. On the 7th of March they sailed, having under convoy between four and five hundred sail of merchant ships. Three days afterwards they parted with Admiral Russell, pursuing their voyage to the Straits;<sup>3</sup> but, in their passage, they met with such a violent storm in the Bay of Biscay, that they were obliged to lay under a mizzen, in which time two Dutch ships of war, one of 72 and the other of 60 guns, unhappily foundered. The Admiral and another English ship lost their main-masts, and the whole fleet was dispersed, and very much shattered; but by good Providence most of the Dutchmen from the wrecks got on board our men-of-war, and Captain Leake hoisting out his boat, had the good fortune to save fifty-five, when they were almost perished. Afterwards he kept company with the other ships in distress, from the 18th at noon till the next day at night, when he was forced to leave them to the mercy of the sea, to preserve his own ship; and at length

William III's Boyne campaign required a fleet under Shovell to convoy his expedition to Ireland; and that the Grand Fleet under Torrington was thus robbed of two vitally requisite detachments at a critical conjuncture in his country's affairs.

<sup>1</sup> Coruña.

<sup>2</sup> Marie Anna of Neuburg, daughter of John William of Neuburg, Elector Palatine.

<sup>3</sup> In the parlance of the time 'Straits' meant 'Mediterranean'; 'Mouth of the Straits,' 'Western Mediterranean'; and 'Bottom of the Straits,' 'Levant.'



the fleet, very much shattered, arrived at Cadiz the 8th of April.

Three days after their arrival, the Admiral, pursuant to an article in his Instructions, ordered Captain Leake in the *Oxford*, with some other ships, to convoy the trade to Malaga and Alicante. The same day therefore he sailed, and having performed that service, returned the 18th.

The 9th of May, the Admiral having received advice of the Toulon squadron, called a council of war and it was resolved to sail with as many ships as were in a condition, and joining six sail that were at Gibraltar, to follow the enemy. Pursuant to this resolution, they sailed, and on the 11th arrived at Gibraltar. Here, the next morning, Captain Leake received a commission from the Admiral to command the *Eagle*, a Third Rate of 70 guns. The same day, in the afternoon, upon advice that the enemy were the night before at anchor in Tetuan Bay, the whole squadron sailed, consisting of fifteen sail of the line, viz. ten English and five Dutch, two frigates, and two fireships. They stood over for Ceuta Point, and lay by all night. The next morning, standing for Tetuan Bay,<sup>1</sup> they found only two ships, one of which was taken, being a French ship bound to Antigua.<sup>2</sup> They then stood over for the Spanish shore, and soon after discovered the French fleet. They chased them till ten the next day; but the French ships being clean, and ours foul (having some of them been seventeen months from the ground), and there being no prospect of coming up with them, they gave over chase; and all the ships having joined the

<sup>1</sup> Lat. 35.30 N., long. 5.0 W.

<sup>2</sup> 'Antegoa,' author's spelling.

Admiral, they bore away for Cadiz ; but, by reason of contrary winds, could not reach that place till the 21st. From thence they soon after made the best of their way for England, and on the 14th of July arrived at Plymouth, after a passage of thirty-five days.<sup>1</sup>

At Plymouth they found Sir Clowdisley Shovell with 10 sail ;<sup>1</sup> and likewise letters from the Admiralty, acquainting the Admiral of the defeat of the Earl of Torrington,<sup>1</sup> advising him therefore to take care for the security of his squadron. Upon this, a council of war was called, and it was resolved to proceed with the ships into Hamoaze, within Plymouth Sound ; and a large battery of cannon was resolved to be raised on shore, to prevent any attempts the enemy might make to enter the harbour. This was performed under the direction of Captain Leake in so convenient a place, that the enemy could not have entered without exposing themselves to a fire, that would have made them shrink. The 27th they were alarmed with the appearance of the French fleet off that harbour, upon which the batteries were manned by detachments from the ships, and all possible preparations were made for a brave defence. But the enemy did not think fit to attack them ; wherefore, continuing there a few days, and hearing no more of the enemy, they run out into the Sound the 10th of August, sailed eight days afterwards, and the 28th anchored at Spithead.

Captain Leake had not arrived here many days, before he received orders to join the fleet going to Ireland, under the command of the

<sup>1</sup> The battle of Beachy Head had been fought on June 30, a fortnight earlier.

joint Admirals, viz. Sir Richard Haddock, Henry Killigrew, Esq., and Sir John Ashby, having on board 6000 soldiers, under the command of the Earl of Marlborough. They sailed the 17th of September, and arrived before Cork the 21st. The next day, it being calm, they were obliged to tow into the harbour, on the left side whereof was a small battery of ten guns, which fired at them very briskly, and killed the Admiral,<sup>1</sup> one man, and wounded two; but the ships giving them a few shot as they passed, they were soon silenced; and the boats going on shore, took possession of it, dismounted the guns, and set it on fire. The two following days were employed in landing the soldiers, to which were added five or six hundred seamen, gunners, &c. to manage the artillery. The 25th, ten pinnaces, manned and armed, went up to attack the town, and four days after the town was taken: whereupon the Admirals, having received orders to return home, weighed from Cork the 2nd of October, and arrived four days afterwards in the Downs. Here Captain Leake continued till the 24th following, when he sailed for Chatham, in order to lay up his ship for the winter; but met with such bad weather in his passage round, that he did not reach Blackstakes till the 5th of November.

During this recess there occurred one remarkable transaction, and that was the trial of the Earl of Torrington, which must not be omitted, Captain Leake being one of the Court Martial. After the Earl had been imprisoned several months in the Tower, he was brought to his trial before the Court Martial at Sheerness, the 10th

<sup>1</sup> This passage appears corrupt. Perhaps we should read 'and killed on board the Admiral, one man, &c.' Certainly no Flag Officer lost his life. See Burchett, p. 430.



of December, to answer the charge against him, of misbehaviour in the late engagement with the French off Beachy, where the Dutch lost six ships, and the English one. This had caused the Dutch to make great clamours against the Earl's conduct ; and, indeed, this great man must have fallen a sacrifice to their resentment, had he not been supported by the integrity of his own countrymen, who scorned to sacrifice the worthy gentleman to the measures of the Court, and the malice of the Dutch.

But there was another cause which was the spring and foundation of Lord Torrington's misfortunes. Admiral Russell looked upon him with envious eyes, as standing in his way ; and being a designing ambitious man, used all arts to supplant him ; and Torrington, not liking the proceedings at the Admiralty, resigned his place at the Board ; which put him entirely in the power of his enemies, who were Russell's friends. They had even superseded his commission before the battle,<sup>1</sup> and got one for Russell ; but the opportunity offering of the battle which followed, they thought it more advisable to bring Torrington into disgrace, to give a sanction to their proceedings, and advance the reputation of Russell. For this end, they procured a positive order from the Queen to him to fight the French, by concealing from her their strength and our weakness ; thus betraying their country for private ends. After the defeat, the public clamour, being well improved

<sup>1</sup> See the Earl of Torrington's Defence in his *Speech to the House of Commons* ; quoted in *A New Naval History, or Complete View of the British Marine*, by Rev. John Entick (1757), p. 548. See also *Passages in the Life of Arthur Earl of Torrington ; with remarks on his Trial and Acquittal* (1691).

both in England and Holland, had the desired effect. Torrington was disgraced and displaced, and Russell made Admiral.

At this Court Martial, Sir Ralph Delavall, who had been a Vice-Admiral in the engagement, was President. 'The first time,' says Mr. Burchett,<sup>1</sup> 'an English Admiral,' (and I may add the chief

<sup>1</sup> Josiah Burchett (?1666-1746), born of mean parentage, became at the age of fourteen body-servant and clerk to Samuel Pepys. He remained in Pepys's service for seven years, but then earned his master's displeasure and was summarily dismissed. When the Revolution of 1688 drove Pepys into retirement, Burchett, relying on his exceptional secretarial experience, importuned the Admiralty for employment; and perhaps as early as 1692, certainly not later than 1694, he became amanuensis to Russell. In 1698 he succeeded to the chair of Pepys himself, and remained Secretary to the Admiralty Board until 1742. He thus served in this capacity throughout the Spanish Succession War; and his knowledge of naval transactions encouraged him to write a maritime 'History,' extending from the voyage of the Argonauts to the overthrow of Marlborough.

The result of his labours, a ponderous folio of 800 pages, was published in 1720. The first half of the work is without value; but the last 400 pages (which deal with the period during which he was secretary) claim close consideration from the student of *The Life of Sir John Leake*. Not that the literary mantle of Pepys fell upon the shoulders of his successor. Burchett's narrative is jejune, and his reticence more marked than Pepys's candour. He passes over in silence transactions which he alone could have illuminated; and contents himself with a bare outline when the variegated and vivid details were at his hand if he had cared to make use of them.

For his task as a writer of history his qualifications were meagre, and there is no reason for surprise that his disappointing book has never called for a reprint. But where authorities differ, Burchett imperatively demands a hearing, because his statements of fact and his expressions of opinion alike are based on a knowledge of documents which no other contemporary enjoyed.

For the sentence quoted here see p. 428.

Admiral and a peer of England,) 'was called to an account in such a manner'; and which shows it was calculated for his destruction. Nay, so little compassion had the King for this unfortunate Admiral, (who was one of the first that went over to meet him in Holland and, by his interest in the Navy and letter to the officers of the fleet, was the chief instrument to bring them to the Prince's measures; and for that reason was entrusted with the command of the Dutch fleet that brought him over,) so little compassion had he for him, that it is said, there was private orders to have executed him directly, if the Court Martial had found him guilty, as the courtiers thought they would have done; though that was stifled, as soon as it was known he was cleared. And this I may say, was very much owing to the conduct of Captain Leake; for, when he found the Court wavering in their opinion, and it was insinuated that all the eyes of the kingdom were upon them, expecting justice, and even threats and promises were likewise used, to work upon the members of the Court to find him guilty, Captain Leake generously undertook his cause, examined every particular of his Lordship's conduct, and so fully justified him, that he brought over the majority to acquit him. But so bent was the King upon his ruin, that the opinion of the Court Martial was returned to be reconsidered, and certified under their hands. This showed plainly what they would have, and, indeed, made some waver; but Captain Leake resolutely adhered to his former opinion, and excited others to do the same; so that they bravely confirmed it under their hands, notwithstanding what had been publicly declared, as well as privately intimated, that they might



expect thereby to lose their bread, or, at least, their preferment.

A Dutch writer<sup>1</sup> says the King was so extremely dissatisfied with their sentence that he discarded some of the members of it from the service, together with two and forty officers of the Navy, who were suspected to be influenced by the Earl. Bishop Burnet, who did not much affect Lord Torrington, and who never has any charity for those he dislikes, is pleased to charge the Court Martial with so gross a partiality, as reflected much on the justice of the nation;<sup>2</sup> but this reflects no more upon the Court Martial than upon the Parliament, who likewise acquitted him, which the Bishop, in his zeal, seems to have forgot. But besides the absurdity of supposing the Court Martial partial to the Earl, when they were told their interest was otherwise and were threatened if they favoured him, whoever impartially considers his defence, which was published at that time, with a draught of the line of battle,<sup>3</sup> as drawn up on both sides in the engagement, must acquit him, as his Peers did, and acknowledge that he took the promptest measures upon the occasion. For having positive orders to fight, he drew up his fleet in the best manner that 56 sail could engage with 84, and if he had disposed them in any other manner, there must have been many more lost. As to

<sup>1</sup> *Leven van Willem Henrik Prins van Orange*, A. Montanus. Amsterdam, 1677.

<sup>2</sup> 'The Commissioners of the Admiralty named a court to try him, who did it with so gross a partiality that it reflected much on the justice of the nation.'—*History of His Own Times*.

<sup>3</sup> *Speech to the House of Commons, with folding plate of Battle*, London, 8vo.

his courage, it could not be suspected, he having upon all occasions given such proofs of it ; and having, as he observes in his speech to the Lords, lost more blood in his country's service than, perhaps, any gentleman in England. Whatever loss the Dutch sustained, was owing to their own ill-conduct, by suffering the French to weather them ; which, as soon as the Admiral perceived, he used the only means to bring them off. In short, whatever has been said to depreciate this action, by Dutchmen, prejudiced persons, or incompetent judges, it was a fine retreat, and is a single instance in the English history where our fleet has engaged with so great superiority, and come off with so little loss ; and as Kennett<sup>1</sup> observes, several French officers who had been in the engagement, coming into England after the Peace, when they could not be suspected of partiality, openly commended the Earl's conduct as rather meriting to be rewarded than censured, since he had preserved the greatest part from being totally destroyed. It is well known, after all that had been done by the Court Martial, his Lordship's conduct was canvassed, for the third time, in Parliament (as I hinted before), where he made a brave and ingenuous defence, and was as bravely acquitted, to the great mortification of the Court. And this is a notable example of the changeable disposition of the English, upon the first ill-success, to forget the man to whom they had been so much and so lately obliged for their deliverance ; and a flagrant instance of the ingratitude of Princes ; but, in this, an act of the greatest cruelty too, as

<sup>1</sup> White Kennett, 1660-1728, Bishop of Peterborough.—*Complete History of England.*

being done to one, who had contributed so much to set the crown upon his head.<sup>1</sup>

The defeat of the Earl of Torrington will likewise afford us matter of reflection upon the naval power of France under that mighty tyrant Louis XIV, that it could increase in so short a time, as to be able to contend with the united force of the two great maritime Powers. Not satisfied to attempt the universal monarchy

<sup>1</sup> The authoritative work on the battle of Beachy Head has yet to be written. Lord Macaulay when he undertook his account in Chapters xv and xvi had most of the essential documents before him, though he did not know of the opinion given above, or of the MS. (then in Lord Hardwicke's collection and since printed by the Camden Society) which gives the fullest description of the tactics employed. No passage in the *History* is more warped by prejudice or vitiated by ignorance. Of Torrington, Macaulay says, 'He placed the Dutch in the van and gave them the signal to engage': apparently supposing that a fleet at sea is drawn up like an army on land. And of the strategic innovator who evolved the *Fleet in Being* he remarks, 'He then fled along the coast of Kent.'

The truth is that William III and all his faithful adherents (including the Whig historian) made no effort to discover what really happened in the battle; and the fleet being divided into two camps, they chose (not unnaturally) to support the Dutchmen who had erred most and suffered proportionately. So long as Englishmen, especially those resident in inland counties, are prone to criticize their sea-commanders, it is good to obtain an antidote to Macaulay's poison from a seaman who lived at the time, knew what he was talking about, and by general admission was so entitled to credit as John Leake.

Further research will probably take as its point of departure the sixth chapter of Admiral Colomb's *Naval Warfare*, and add to Macaulay's list of authorities Eugène Sue, *Histoire de la Marine Française*, Auguste Jal, *Dictionnaire critique de Biographie et d'Histoire*, Paul Hoste, *Evolutions Navales* (especially pp. 281-2), and J. C. de Jonge, *Geschiedenis van het Nederlandsche Zeewezen*, vol. iii.



of the Earth, he must compass the Sea too, and circumscribe the whole globe with his dominion, agreeable to that Prince's vain device of the sun, with the motto, *Nec pluribus impar* ; by which they confessed their meaning to be, that he was capable of governing the whole world as the sun was of enlightening it. But his sun was now at its meridian height. It will soon decline, and at length suffer an eclipse. But this was reserved for the glory of another reign, and will be the subject of the following Books. But to return to our story.

After the trial of the Earl of Torrington, though he was acquitted, His Majesty thought fit to lay him aside, and thereby made room for Mr. Russell, who succeeded him as Admiral of the Fleet ; and great diligence was used to get a large fleet ready for an early campaign. We must therefore return to Captain Leake, whom we left Commander of the *Eagle* at Chatham. He was now very busy there, refitting his ship, in order to make one of the fleet to go with the Admiral. For this purpose, his ship being ready, he sailed to the Nore the 7th of March, where, eight days afterwards, the Admiral hoisted his flag on board the *Britannia*. The next day, Prince George of Denmark came down to see the fleet, and being accompanied by the Admiral, went on board a ship of each rate ; and, to see a Third Rate, did Captain Leake the honour to come on board the *Eagle*, which was likewise a mark of the Admiral's favour, notwithstanding what had so lately passed in relation to the Earl of Torrington. And I think it remarkable, that although Mr. Russell was excessively proud and haughty ; difficult to be pleased unless flattered ; and implacable if offended ; and Captain Leake

was one that could not gain favour by such mean compliances, but did his duty bravely and honestly without respecting the person of any man; yet Mr. Russell always showed a particular regard for him, which could be only upon account of his extraordinary merit and qualifications.

The ships from the river and from Chatham being joined at the Nore, the 14th of May<sup>1</sup> they sailed, and two days after anchored in the Downs. The same day the Admiral came from London and hoisted his flag, the fleet then consisting of 74 sail of the line, besides a great many frigates, fireships, &c. They were detained there by tempestuous weather till the 9th of June. The 14th the fleet got off the Isle of Wight, when the Admiral called a council of war. Soon after they were off Plymouth, but were forced into Torbay the 20th. Two days after they sailed again, when the Admiral received advice of the French fleet, consisting of 80 sail. Upon this they stretched over for the coast of France and off Ushant, to endeavour to intercept them, and remained cruising between Scilly and Ushant till the 2nd of September, when they were taken with a violent storm, insomuch, that all that could possibly be done (which nevertheless Burnet finds much fault with<sup>2</sup>) was to bear up for so dangerous a port as Plymouth, and by reason of the wind and the haziness of the weather, the fleet was so dispersed, that not half of them arrived with the Admiral in the Sound. A Second Rate foundered, and most of the great

<sup>1</sup> 1691.

<sup>2</sup> 'Russell . . . came into Plymouth in a storm, which was much censured; for that road is not safe, and two considerable ships were lost upon the occasion.'—*History of His Own Times*.

ships, not being able to weather the easternmost point of land, at the entrance into the Sound, were forced to come to an anchor upon a lee shore. The Hanover, a Third Rate, bulged,<sup>1</sup> and two more tailed<sup>2</sup> ashore, but were afterwards got off; and most of them were miserably shattered in their masts, sails, and rigging. Nevertheless, being mostly joined by the 15th, they sailed for the Downs, and Captain Leake with his ship to Chatham, where we shall leave him laid up for the winter.

Thus ended a very expensive and fruitless campaign, as well to the officers of the fleet as to the nation. It answered Admiral Russell's purpose only, who obtained from the King a grant of Suffolk Street, valued at £18,000 to make his equipage as Admiral, though he did not go beyond the mouth of the Channel; and was First Commissioner of the Admiralty and Treasurer of the Navy all the time.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Or 'bilged,' viz. was fractured or broken in the bulge or bilge, that is, in the floor of the ship or in the flattest part of her bottom on one side or other of the keel.

<sup>2</sup> Took the ground *abaft* only.

<sup>3</sup> Burchett has a long review of Russell's 1691 campaign; *Complete History*, pp. 433-51. See also *Memoirs relating to the Lord Torrington*, pp. 50-62.



## CHAPTER V

*The campaign of 1692; a particular account of the battle of La Hogue; Captain Leake's proceedings therein, and afterwards with the fleet in the Soundings.*

EARLY in the spring<sup>1</sup> Captain Leake hastened to Chatham to look after the refitting his ship, the *Eagle*, which he was always careful should be ready one of the first to join the fleet. Accordingly he got out of that harbour the latter end of February. He continued at the Nore till April 26 following, by which time a considerable squadron having been formed under the command of Sir Ralph Delavall, they sailed from thence, and two days afterwards anchored in the Downs. The next day they left that place, stretching over for the coast of France in their way to Spithead, where they joined the rest of the ships designed to form the Grand Fleet for that campaign, under the command of Admiral Russell.

The two squadrons being thus united, a council of war was called, and immediately some light frigates were dispatched to gain intelligence of the French fleet. Having likewise considered of a malicious report that several of the captains of the fleet were disaffected (which had been transmitted to the Admiral by the Secretary of

<sup>1</sup> 1692.

State <sup>1)</sup> they joined in a dutiful address to Their Majesties. But this was thought to be only a political contrivance to put their allegiance to the test.

The 18th of May, the Admiral sailed towards the coast of France, the fleet consisting of near 100<sup>2</sup> sail of the line; and the following day, very early in the morning, had notice given by the scouts of discovering the enemy, being about 53 sail of fighting ships; upon which our fleet was drawn into a line of battle. About eight o'clock the line was pretty well formed, stretching from S.S.W. to N.N.E.; the Dutch in the van, the Admiral in the centre, and the Blue in the rear; but by reason there had been little wind the night before, the Dutch were very far ahead, and the Blue a great way astern. The French Admiral taking advantage of this posture of our fleet, bore down bravely upon the centre, and bringing to very near our Admiral, began the engagement, which by that means was wholly with the Red Squadron that formed the Admiral's division, and the French being superior, both in the number and bigness of their ships, hoped, no doubt, by this resolute attack, to force a passage through our line.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Daniel Finch, Earl of Nottingham, known from his resemblance to a Spanish grandee as 'Don Dismallo' or 'Don Diego.' The response of the fleet is printed in full by Burchett, p. 464.

<sup>2</sup> There is still considerable uncertainty about this figure. Sir John Laughton has given it as his opinion that seventeen sail of the line were absent refitting.

<sup>3</sup> These comments are unhappily without real value. Russell, having a marked superiority, ordered his van and rear to 'double' on the foe as the French had doubled at Beachy Head. The wind was light and made such manœuvres difficult, especially as the English had the leeward

Captain Leake was the third ship ahead of the Admiral<sup>1</sup>; the second ahead was a ship of 50 guns, which being opposed to a great ship of the enemy's, was soon obliged to go out of the line; whereupon Captain Leake, backing astern, closed the line; and the battle continued from eleven till near four, with great fury on both sides; when, the enemy finding they could not force the line, and having suffered very much, Monsieur Tourville prudently retreated whilst he was able, and towed away, there being but little wind, all the French fleet doing the like, being much favoured in their retreat by a fog, which arose

berth. The Dutch (under Allemonde) who formed the van were thwarted by the dispositions of Tourville, who (according to the testimony of many witnesses) stretched his small fleet 'as far to the southward as ours.' The red or centre squadron (while the wings were finessing) may have borne the brunt of the French attack; but by doing so they enabled the rear to plant itself on the line of the enemy's retreat and so complete his discomfiture. Of the extant accounts of the battle Burchett's is so full (pp. 465-70) that Macaulay for once was enabled to do something like justice to a sea theme (chap. xviii). Captain George Byng was unhappily prevented from taking part in the affray, so that the *Memoirs relating to the Lord Torrington* shed little new light on a struggle which has been undeservedly neglected by students of research. (See *Army and Navy Gazette*, May 21, 1892; *Quarterly Review*, April 1893; and *Annuaire Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire de France*, 1877, 'M. de Bonrepaus et le désastre de la Hougue.') There is an interesting notice of the battle inserted in the parish registers of Northwood, Isle of Wight, and this has been printed with annotations in *Archæologia*. For a précis of the correspondence between Russell and Nottingham during the campaign, see N.R.S., vol. xl, pp. 168-202; for Russell's dispatch *Harl. Misc.*, iv, 550. Père Hoste's comments will be found in *Evolutions Navales*, p. 381.

<sup>1</sup> Russell had his flag in the *Britannia*. Next ahead of him came the *St. Andrew* (a First Rate), then the *Chester* (a Fifty), and then the *Eagle*.



about that time.<sup>1</sup> We lost abundance of men in the battle, and the ships were much shattered ; and had not the whole division stood stiffly to it, the enemy had defeated our centre, whilst the van and the rear had been idle spectators only.

Captain Leake's ship, the *Eagle*, suffered very much in this battle, having, for a considerable time, been exposed to the fire of two of the enemy's great ships. Her mizzen-mast was shot so that it fell upon the deck, the fore-mast and bowsprit were much damaged, and main top-mast shot, fore and mainstay shot away, and the ship's hull very much torn, besides 17 guns, and her sheet and small bower anchors disabled, 70 men killed outright, and more than twice that number wounded. Amongst the latter was the First Lieutenant, Mr. Martin, Captain Leake's brother-in-law,<sup>2</sup> who, having been twice wounded, and being upon the quarter-deck, receiving his brother's orders, a cannon-ball had like to have taken them both off together, for it passed between them as they were speaking to each other.<sup>3</sup> Notwith-

<sup>1</sup> It was under cover of this fog that Shovell and Carter completed their arrangements for weathering the enemy's line.

<sup>2</sup> Captain John Leake and Stephen Martin (father of the biographer) married respectively Christian and Eliza Hill, daughters of Captain Richard Hill, an eminent seaman of Yarmouth.

<sup>3</sup> A different account is given in our author's *Life of Captain Stephen Martin* (p. 15), 'None animated the seamen more by his example than Lieutenant Martin ; but he had like to have paid severely for it ; for getting upon the booms to give some orders, a cannon-ball shot the boom which he stood upon from under him, and besides the danger from the shot, he escaped another no less imminent of falling down the hold. The seamen who saw him immediately cried out that Lieutenant Martin was killed, which (like ill news) soon reached Captain Leake upon the quarter-deck, and was a great shock to him. But Mr. Martin, who was only hurt

standing the ill condition of the Eagle, Captain Leake applied himself with so much diligence to repair the damage, that he performed his duty with the rest in the pursuit of the enemy.

About four o'clock it was a thick fog, so that none of the enemy could be seen ; upon which all firing ceased ; but clearing up in a little time, the French Admiral was discovered towing away northward, our Admiral's division doing the like, it being calm. About seven the wind springing up at east, the French made sail : but our Blue Squadron having got to the westward of the enemy,<sup>1</sup> during the engagement, they fell in with them, and were engaged afresh, whereby the Admiral's division came up with them and they run and fought till night ended it, with the loss of one ship blown up, and another burnt, by our fireships.

It continued foggy all night, and so hazy the next morning, that not any of the enemy, and but few of our own ships could be seen ; but clearing up about eight o'clock, the Dutch made the signal of seeing the French fleet ; and about nine, 34 sail were discovered, about two or three

and stunned by the fall, soon got upon his legs, and immediately went upon the quarter-deck to let his captain and brother-in-law see that he was living, and receive his commands. But even this compliment was not paid but with equal hazard, for as he was going up the stairs to the quarter-deck, a shot carried away the rails, and passed so near his legs that they were so numbed with the wind of the shot that he could hardly stand. But after a little pause, he passed on ; and after Captain Leake and he had given each other a hearty embrace, they both resumed the fight with greater cheerfulness.'

It is probable that our author was speaking from memory and momentarily confused what happened at Barfleure with what happened at Malaga in 1704.—*Ibid.* p. 78.

<sup>1</sup> Admiral Carter's manœuvre.

leagues off, the wind at S.S.E., our ships chasing with all the sail they could (having the weather-gage) but not in a line that so every ship might make the best of their way ; but the enemy soon left them. Between eleven and twelve, the wind veered to the south-west, when the French crowded away northward, and our fleet after them. About four, the tide of ebb being done, both fleets anchored, the French about three leagues' distance to windward, and the weather hazy. At midnight our fleet weighed again, continuing the chase till day, and then saw the French again, both plying westward, and so continued till four, the French then being got between Cape de la Hogue and the Isle of Alderney, the Cape bearing S. by W. and Alderney S.S.W. When the French coming to an anchor at once, with all their sails standing, our ships drove out with the current to the eastward, and by this stratagem the greatest part of them got off ; a circumstance, which our naval historians were not acquainted with, or carefully concealed.<sup>1</sup> As soon as this stratagem was discovered, our fleet anchored ; but about eight in the morning the flood being done, the French cut, upon which the Admiral made the signal to do the same, which being done, our fleet chased along shore after the French, to Cherbourg.<sup>2</sup> There the Admiral of France, and three<sup>3</sup> great ships more, run close in, the Admiral cutting away all his masts ; and Sir Ralph Delavall was left with them, and afterwards destroyed them ;. part of the

<sup>1</sup> The reference, of course, is to Burchett, who is supposed capable of suppressing any circumstance that could weigh against Russell's reputation.

<sup>2</sup> 'Sherbrock,' author's spelling.

<sup>3</sup> Two.




Red Squadron (of which Captain Leake was one) pursuing the rest. About four in the afternoon, the Admiral having advice that eighteen of the enemy's ships, which were got to the eastward of Cape Barfleur, had haled<sup>1</sup> in for La Hogue, followed them, and anchored there about ten at night. The next morning early he weighed, and stood in near the land, and anchored again; and at two in the afternoon plied in close with La Hogue, where they found 13 of the enemy's ships very near the shore.

On Monday the 23rd of May, Mr. Rooke, Vice-Admiral of the Blue, was ordered to go in with a squadron, some fireships, and the boats of the fleet, to destroy those ships; and for that purpose hoisted his flag on board the *Eagle*, Captain Leake, notwithstanding the ill condition she was in. About seven in the evening he sailed, and got as near the enemy's ships as possible; but they had run themselves so far in, that none but the small frigates could advance near enough for service. However, they kept firing at them, and at night the boats going in, set six of their capital ships, of three decks each, on fire, and came away by their light. The next morning they made a second attempt, and as successful as the former, burning the other seven, of 60 and 70 guns each, with one storeship; the *Eagle's* boats, commanded by Lieutenant Martin, Captain Leake's first Lieutenant, setting fire to one of the great ships, and doing otherwise very considerable service. After that they went up a creek, and set fire to twelve or fourteen sail of merchant ships; and all this in sight of the French and Irish camp, that lay ready to invade England. If they had kept

<sup>1</sup> So A.V., *Acts* viii. 3; now invariably spelled 'haul.'

on board their ships, as King James advised, and defended them, it would have been impossible for our fleet to have destroyed them, none but small ships being able to come near them. But they had suffered so much in the battle, and were under such terrors, that they left most of their wounded men to perish with the ships, though they had time given them on purpose to carry them off. Sir <sup>1</sup> George Rooke having thus entirely executed his orders in destroying the French ships, he weighed with his squadron, and soon after joined the Admiral, who sailed the 25th, and arrived at St. Helens the day following. Queen Mary was no sooner informed of this victory, than she sent a gratuity of £30,000 to Portsmouth to be distributed amongst the seamen and soldiers; medals were struck and given to the officers, as tokens of honour; and the bodies of Rear-Admiral Carter, and Colonel Hastings, who were killed in the battle, were honourably interred.

As to the battle itself, it was a very confused business, though fortunately crowned with success; but the success might have been much greater, if it had been as well conducted on our part, as on the part of the enemy, who made a brave attack, and a fine retreat, without having one ship taken; so that little glory could redound to the Admiral for having beaten 56 sail with near 100. But considering the situation of our fleet, and the absence of the van and rear, it was as brave as if it had consisted of the Red Squadron only; and therefore it may truly be said, that the enemy were beat by an inferior number. And the success that followed at Cherbourg and La Hogue gave

 <sup>1</sup> His knighthood was conferred in recognition of this service.

such a shock to the naval power of France, that they never appeared with a fleet able to face ours afterwards during the war. It likewise prevented their design of pushing over King James for<sup>1</sup> Ireland at the head of 20,000 men; for which they only waited the issue of a battle. And this defeat fell so heavy upon King James, that it made him give over all thoughts of recovering his crown, and at length broke his heart.

It was believed, (says Bishop Burnet,) 'that if this success had been pursued with vigour, considering the consternation with which the French were struck, that the victory might have been carried much farther than it was; but Russell was provoked by some letters and orders sent him by the Queen, and upon that he fell into a crossness of disposition; he found fault with every order that was sent him, but would offer no advice on his part.'

The fleet being returned to Portsmouth, and having been refitted, sailed from Spithead the 14th of June to endeavour to prevent the French Blue Squadron, which had got into St. Malo after the late battle, and was now repaired, from joining the rest in Brest harbour; and in order to improve the late victory by making a descent upon France. Three days after, Captain Leake, in company with five sail more, having been refitted, followed after, and joined the fleet on the coast of France. The 2nd of July the whole fleet anchored in Guernsey Road. Three days after, Vice-Admiral Rooke with 32 sail, was sent off St. Malo, and the rest of the fleet sailed a cruising, but were forced by bad weather, the 8th, into Torbay. Here they were joined by Mr.

<sup>1</sup> 'From' in the text.



Rooke from the coast of St. Malo, where he had been taking the soundings, in order to attack that place.<sup>1</sup> Upon this a council of war was called; and the 15th the whole fleet sailed from Torbay, and several detachments were made to intercept the St. Malo squadron, whilst the Admiral, with the gross of the fleet (wherein Captain Leake remained) continued to cruise to and fro, as wind and weather permitted; but the wind coming westerly, and fearing they might be drove to the eastward of Torbay, they put in there with the fleet, and took in provisions. They sailed from thence the 26th, and two days after were joined by the transports with the land forces, under the command of the Duke of Leinster. Upon this junction a council of war was held, consisting of sea and land officers; and it was agreed to be impracticable to attempt St. Malo, or any other place, so late in the year. Kennett says, that in regard<sup>2</sup> this fleet set sail with a fair wind, in the most favourable season of the year, there was no small expectation of some considerable enterprise; but in four or five days the transports, with part of the fleet, returned to St. Helens. This unexpected return occasioned various conjectures. Enquiry was afterwards made in Parliament, in relation to the escape of the French ships which got into St. Malo, after the late battle, and why a descent had not been made, as was intended. Russell made but poor excuses. But the House of Commons, of which he was a member (says Burnet), gave him thanks over and over, and remained so fixed, that though the Lords then communicated to the Commons

<sup>1</sup> Rooke's report is printed in full by Burchett, pp. 472-3.

<sup>2</sup> Considering.

the papers which the Earl of Nottingham, Secretary of State, had laid before them, they would not so much as read them. The King was, however, so well satisfied with his misconduct, that he set him aside in the spring.<sup>1</sup>

This expedition against France having been laid aside, as above-mentioned, Captain Leake after a short cruise in the Channel, arrived at Spithead the 7th of September. The 18th Sir John Ashby hoisted his flag on board the *Eagle*, and the next day sailed with 25 ships of the line, English and Dutch and 8 fireships. They cruised off Ushant ten days, and the 1st of October put into Torbay, from whence they sailed the 9th, and the next day anchored at St. Helens. The Admiral continued his flag flying till the 3rd of November, when he removed to another ship, the *Eagle* being ordered to Chatham. Pursuant to these orders Captain Leake sailed the 11th, and after a very bad passage, arrived at the place the 14th of November; and the last of December the *Eagle* was put out of commission.

<sup>1</sup> Rooke's report was favourable to a descent on the enemy's coast, but condemned as impracticable any attempt to destroy the squadron under d'Amfreville that Hervé Riel had piloted into the Rance.

## CHAPTER VI

*Captain Leake's proceedings with a squadron in the Channel, and afterwards with the Grand Fleet in the Mediterranean, Channel, and Soundings, to the conclusion of the war.*

THE day Captain Leake was discharged from the *Eagle* at Chatham, he was commissioned for the *Plymouth* at Portsmouth, a Third Rate of 60 guns ; for, by Mr. Pepys's List of the Navy and all lines of battle at this time, it appears 60-gun ships were Third Rates, but under 60 guns were Fourth Rates. There was at this time a great want of seamen ; nevertheless, by his application and good character he manned his ship, and got her in a readiness for the sea by the 27th of February.<sup>1</sup> He was thereupon ordered upon a cruise in the Channel. Pursuant to these orders, on the 8th of March he sailed from Spithead, taking under his command the *Adventure*, *Crown*, *Soldadoes' Prize*, and *Goodwin* sloop. Two days after he was off the *Saine Head*,<sup>2</sup> and discovered two sail which he chased. But not being able to come up with them, he lay by the next day to join his squadron. The following day he chased two sail more till night intercepted them ;

<sup>1</sup> 1693.

<sup>2</sup> From another passage (see below, p. 112) it would appear that by *Saine Head* (variously spelled) our author meant the *Pointe de Saire* midway between *Barfleur* and *La Hogue*.



and by that means they got off. In this chase several of his squadron lost company ; but the 16th he fell in with them again and a Swedish ship they had stopped on suspicion, which being laden with iron and deals and having but a single bill of lading, he thought proper to retain as prize.

On the 18th they had very hard gales, when they chased, and came up with a ship, which proved to be the Diamond man-of-war going for the Downs ; and having put the prize under his convoy, and the prisoners on board him, he continued his cruise. The two following days he chased a ship under Dutch colours ; but she going from them, he put into Spithead, and having watered his ships pursued his cruise, being joined by the York. The next day he chased a small ship, which, losing her mainmast, he came up with off the Isle of Alderney ; but she only proved an Ostender. The 3rd of April he re-took a small ketch off the island of Batz.<sup>1</sup> Early the next morning he discovered a fleet coming along shore to the number of eighteen. Immediately he endeavoured to cut them off from the land, but before he could reach them, they run in amongst the rocks, and got into a place called Port Sal ;<sup>2</sup> but he came up with one in the rear of the fleet, which he took to be of their number but proved to be a small English merchant ship. Presently Captain Leake ordered his own and the York's boats to be manned and armed, and putting a pilot on board the merchant ship, sent them all in to see if any way they could take or destroy them ; but the weather was so bad they

<sup>1</sup> Lat. 48.50 N., Long. 4.0 W.

<sup>2</sup> Burchett marks the place on the west coast of Brittany immediately facing Ushant ; *Complete History*, p. 407. Porsall is evidently meant, Lat. 48.35 N., Long. 4.45 W.

could do nothing. The next day he attempted again to go into Port Sal, but the weather hindered him, and blew so fresh, they were forced to keep off the land. On the 9th he made a shift to look in again, and saw them remaining there still ; but it blew so hard he could do nothing, and continued so for two days, that he broke both topmasts. The 12th, being off Portland, and having got up other topmasts, he crowded away for Cape de la Hogue. The next day he was off the Cape ; and, feeling all clear, he bore away for Spithead, being in want both of provisions and water, and arrived there the last of April.

Here he found orders to convoy the East India and Virginia ships on their way to those places. Accordingly he delivered out Sailing Instructions for that purpose ; and being joined by the Crown and two Dutch men-of-war, he sailed ; but was forced to lie by some time for his convoys, in all ninety-four, which having joined him, he continued, with an easy sail, to keep the merchant ships together ; and on the 9th of May arrived with them in Plymouth Sound. On the 30th he intended to have sailed from thence with his convoy ; but two Dutch men-of-war going out of the Sound that morning, returned with sails flying, having discovered a fleet. Upon which he ordered the merchant ships to make preparation to get into the harbour ; but soon after another Dutch ship, coming in, dissipated their fears by bringing an account that it was only a fleet of Danes and Swedes from St. Ubes.<sup>1</sup> The next day therefore he sailed with his convoy, being increased now to 150 sail ; and the day following he joined the Grand Fleet, under the

<sup>1</sup> Setubal, Lat. 38.30 N., Long. 9.0 W.

command of the joint Admirals, Killigrew, Shovell, and Delavall, who had orders to proceed with the trade as far as should be judged necessary, having likewise with them the Turkey and Mediterranean trade, which were to be convoyed by a strong squadron, under the command of Sir George Rooke; and for their greater security were to be accompanied by the whole fleet thirty leagues W.S.W. from Ushant, to secure them from the Brest and Toulon squadrons. But the Admirals not having received any intelligence of the enemy, resolved at a council of war, June 4, they would accompany the Mediterranean squadron with the trade twenty leagues farther, and then proceed to the rendez-vous, ten leagues north-west of Ushant; so that leaving the Straits convoy on the 6th of June, with Sir George Rooke (who parted with some reluctance as foreseeing the danger he was exposed to) they arrived at the rendez-vous two days after.

In the meantime some ships that had been sent to gain intelligence, returned the 17th with an account that there were not any ships in Brest; and a number of ships having been seen some days before off Scilly, they were judged to be the French fleet. Whereupon it was determined to sail for Scilly, in quest of the enemy, and from thence to Torbay, where they arrived the 21st of June. Two days after the Admirals held a council of war, upon orders received from the Queen, in relation to the danger Sir George Rooke was in, and they resolved to proceed to Lisbon to join him; but presently after they agreed they had not provisions sufficient to enable them to do so.

In the meantime the blow was<sup>1</sup> given, and the

<sup>1</sup> The disaster to the Smyrna convoy, June 1693.



greatest that happened to our trade during the war, whereby we lost 4 men-of-war, viz. 3 Dutch and 1 English ; 40 merchant ships taken, of which 4 were rich Smyrna ships, and 50 destroyed. This miscarriage was charged to the joint Admirals ; because, first, they neglected to see the convoy out of danger, which they had reason to fear ; and, in the next place, because they did not endeavour to follow them, when they were ordered to do so, and knew the danger they were in. Upon the examination of this unhappy miscarriage by the House of Commons, it was resolved, that the fleet had sufficient provisions on board (when they parted with Sir George Rooke) to have served them till they had accompanied that squadron out of danger ; and that there had been notorious and treacherous mismanagement in the miscarriage of the Smyrna fleet. Burnet says, two of the Admirals were thought to be in King James's interest ; but that no exception lay against Shovell, who was joined to give a reputation to the commission. But though the miscarriage was very notorious it passed over, the House not being able to fix the particular blame, a conveniency which will ever attend joint commissions.<sup>1</sup>

After the Admirals had received advice of this misfortune, they made a short cruise, wherein, on the 19th of July, Captain Leake removed from the *Eagle*, being appointed Captain of the *Ossory*, a Second Rate, being then off the *Lizard*. They continued cruising till the 16th of August, when the fleet arrived in Torbay ; and the *Ossory* proving very leaky, was ordered, with some other

<sup>1</sup> The disaster, for all that, terminated the fighting careers of Delavall and Killigrew.

ships, to repair to Chatham. Accordingly Captain Leake took those ships under his command, and arrived at that place the 3rd of September, and continued there all the winter.

Upon the King's return from Holland, His Majesty, to show a just resentment, dissolved the joint commission, and appointed Mr. Russell Admiral of the Fleet in their stead ; and preparations were forthwith made for a large fleet to be early at sea for the next summer expedition. Captain Leake's ship, the *Ossory*, being appointed for that service, he sailed from Chatham River, and joined the Admiral of the Blue at the Nore the 12th of March, from whence they sailed, and arrived in the Downs the 22nd of April, 1694. There they were joined by 13 sail of Dutch men-of-war, upon which they sailed directly for Portsmouth, and joined the Grand Fleet the 7th of May.

Upon this junction, Admiral Russell sailed with the gross of the fleet, leaving Sir Clowdisley Shovell with a good squadron (of which Captain Leake was one) to take in the forces designed against Brest ; and each ship took on board their proportion of 6000 men for that purpose. The 3rd of June they left Spithead, and three days after joined the Admiral ; but the squadron soon parted again, those with Sir Clowdisley Shovell going upon the Brest expedition,<sup>1</sup> except Captain Leake, whom the Admiral was pleased to retain with him, to go to the Mediterranean.

The 25th they got into the latitude of 39 degrees off the Rock of Lisbon, when some ships were dispatched to Cape St. Vincent, to gain intelligence of the enemy. The 30th of May

<sup>1</sup> The unhappy expedition of General Tollemache.

Rear-Admiral Nevell with the Dutch joined the fleet, upon which the line of battle was formed, consisting of 63 ships. Upon this junction it was resolved to proceed after the French fleet, which they had advice was off Barcelona; but they did not arrive at Carthagena till the 13th of July, by reason the wind had been easterly, ever since they entered the Straits. In the meantime the French fleet returned to the Isle of Hyères, off of Toulon. The 21st the fleet came to an anchor in Altea Bay<sup>1</sup> to water. From thence they sailed the 27th, and two days after arrived at Barcelona where they continued till the 16th of August; and having proceeded down the Straits as far as Malaga, the Admiral received orders to winter at Cadiz.

Hereupon it was resolved to proceed up the Mediterranean as far as Alicante, which they did accordingly, and arrived there the 10th of September. During the time they lay there, Admiral Russell was taken so ill that he was obliged to go on shore, committing the fleet to the care of Vice-Admiral Aylmer of the Blue squadron, with orders to sail in quest of the French, which he had intelligence were at sea. Pursuant to these orders he sailed with the fleet, September 15; but, meeting with nothing remarkable, returned the 22nd of the same month. By this time the Admiral being in a better state of health, returned on board, and the 29th sailed, and arrived at Cadiz the 8th of October.

The fleet being laid up at Cadiz for the winter, the reparations<sup>2</sup> were vigorously carried on, to make them ready for the sea against the spring. For this purpose, the latter end of December,

<sup>1</sup> Lat. 38.30 N., on the meridian of Greenwich.

<sup>2</sup> Repairs.



several ships with naval stores, officers and artificers, arrived from England. In the meantime a small squadron was detached to cruise till the 12th of February, for the protection of the trade and the annoyance of the enemy. By this squadron two French men-of-war were taken, one of 70 and the other of 60 guns ; and in March a strong squadron was sent out under Admiral Nevell. Soon after the land-forces arrived from England, and by the 30th of April, 1695, the whole fleet came to sail.

The 8th of May the fleet anchored off Alicante, and ten days after at Barcelona, from whence they sailed the 20th, lying off of Toulon. The 22nd of June the fleet arrived in Cagliari Bay, at the island of Sardinia, to water, and the 18th of July came to Barcelona ; and having agreed with the Viceroy to attempt Palamos,<sup>1</sup> they proceeded thither. The 12th of August Sir Martin Beckman,<sup>2</sup> with eight bomb-ketches, went in near the walls of Palamos, and did considerable damage to the town ; and near 4000 forces were landed. But the Admiral having intelligence from Toulon that the French had sixty sail of ships ready to put to sea, it was determined to re-embark the forces ; which being done, the Admiral returned down the Straits, and arrived in Cadiz Bay the 23rd of September. Here, having appointed Sir David Mitchell with a squadron to remain abroad, himself, with the rest (amongst which Captain Leake was one) sailed for England, and arrived in the Downs the 6th of November. Though no action of consequence was performed these two campaigns, and Admiral Russell added nothing

<sup>1</sup> Lat. 39.50 N., Long. 3.20 E.

<sup>2</sup> Colonel, Chief Engineer, and Master-Gunner of England.

to his reputation, yet it was an honour to the nation to have the British fleet riding triumphantly in the Mediterranean, whilst the French fleet remained cooped up in the harbour of Toulon.

Two days after the arrival of the fleet, Captain Leake sailed with the ships for Chatham, where they arrived soon after, in order to be refitted for the next campaign.

The beginning of the year 1696, the French were making preparations for a descent upon England ; but Admiral Russell, appearing suddenly upon the enemy's coast, prevented their design ; and then, leaving the fleet to attend the other functions of his duty as First Commissioner of the Admiralty and Treasurer of the Navy,<sup>1</sup> the command of the fleet fell to Sir George Rooke, then lately arrived from the Straits.

Captain Leake had been at Blackstakes ever since the 24th of February, where he remained waiting for orders till the April following. The latter end of that month he joined the fleet in the Downs under the command of Sir George Rooke, from whence they soon proceeded to Spithead. The 4th of May the fleet sailed from thence, proceeding down the Channel, in order to intercept the Toulon squadron and prevent them from getting into any port of France. Four days after, being off of Dartmouth, they had intelligence that the French fleet had been seen six days before in the latitude of 45. The 14th the fleet were on the coast of Ushant, where they had further intelligence that the Toulon fleet got into Brest the 5th, being 45 ships of the line. Whereupon at a council of war it was resolved to repair to

<sup>1</sup> The ADMIRALTY (*Administration*) and the NAVY OFFICE (*Supply*) were still separate and distinct Boards, housed in different buildings and performing different functions.

Torbay, where they arrived the 23rd ; and four days after their arrival there, Sir George Rooke left the fleet to the command of John Lord Berkeley, who was appointed Admiral of the Fleet. He presently ordered the fleet to sail ; the 24th got out of the Channel ; and in Broad Sound <sup>1</sup> one of the ships took a privateer. The 1st of July they were off Ushant. The next day they bore away for Belle Isle in the Bay of Biscay, and two days after came to an anchor in that road ; upon which all the ships' boats manned and armed, were sent on shore upon Houat, one of the isles called Cardinals, and burnt and destroyed all the houses, cattle, and whatever they could find there. The next day they did the like to Hovais and Hoëdic, two other of those islands adjacent, having made a terrible havoc of many hundred houses and cattle, besides destroying about twenty sail of small vessels. Sailing from thence the day following, they arrived again at Torbay the 22nd of August ; from thence they came to Spithead the 31st ; and the 20th of September arrived in the Downs. Here the Admiral left the fleet. The next day Captain Leake took under his command the ships designed for Chatham and the River of Thames. The 23rd he came to the Nore, and the 18th of October arrived at Blackstakes.

By this time, both sides being pretty well tired of the war, the preparations for the next campaign went on but slowly. However, it being necessary to keep the sword drawn till matters were fully concluded, a fleet was assembled

<sup>1</sup> The 'Passage de l'Iroise' or main approach to the 'Goulet' of Brest ; known to sixteenth-century English mariners as 'The Trade,' or 'The Trade of St. Matthew' ; see Rymer's *Foedera*, orig. edit., iv, 836.



in the spring under the command of Sir George Rooke. The latter end of April Captain Leake joined the fleet in the Downs, from whence they sailed the 6th of May, and four days afterwards arrived at Spithead. There they were joined by ten sail of Dutch men-of-war; upon which a council of war was held, and the ships were found to be in want both of provisions and men. Notwithstanding this, they received orders for proceeding to sea, which they did the 23rd to the number of 33 sail (English and Dutch) and 8 fireships. The 25th they were joined by Admiral Mitchell, with his squadron, which made them 44 sail of the line. They arrived off Ushant the 28th, at which time they discovered there were in Brest but 10 ships ready for sea; whereupon they cruised in the mouth of the Channel, till, provisions growing short, they returned to Torbay, the place of rendez-vous, and from thence arrived at Spithead the 28th of August. Soon after, the war being concluded by the ratification of the Peace of Ryswick the 20th of September 1697, Captain Leake received orders to go to Chatham to lay up his ship. He arrived there the 10th of October, and the 5th of December his ship was paid off. So that from his first command of the *Firedrake* in 1688 to this time, making upwards of nine years, he had not been one day out of commission.

## CHAPTER VII

*His proceedings after the Peace of Ryswick to the commencement of the War with France, anno 1702. He is appointed First Captain to the Lord High Admiral. Concluding with the state of the Navy during King William's reign.*

WE have now brought Captain Leake to the conclusion of King William's War, which he finished with as much reputation to himself, and honour to his country, as anyone had done in the station of a private captain. Though he was now out of commission, he was not wholly unprovided for. His Majesty some time before had taken into consideration the hardships that the officers of the Navy would be exposed to in a time of peace, if they had not improved their fortunes by some lucky hit during the war, especially the senior officers, who, having spent their strength in the service of their country, well deserved to be supported at the public charge. Besides, he had found by experience a great scarcity of officers the beginning of the war for want of some provision in time of peace. His Majesty therefore in Council, the 22nd of February 1693-4, established an allowance of half-pay to the Captains and some other officers of the Navy, to commence from the 1st of January 1693-4, whereby every Captain was entitled

to half the pay of the biggest ship he had commanded for one year, or in a general engagement. Captain Leake, therefore, by his command of the *Ossory*, was entitled to the half-pay of a Second Rate. This was the state of the half-pay at the Peace of Ryswick ; but by a second establishment in the year 1700, the method was altered, and the half-pay made perpetual. From the 1st of July the fifty senior Captains, who had served in the preceding war, were to be supported on shore ; and in like manner the fifty senior Captains always for the time to come, to be ready upon any occasion, whereof the first twenty were to receive ten shillings a day, and the rest eight shillings a day. This alteration was in favour of the twenty senior officers, by giving them the half-pay of First Rates, though some of them were not otherwise entitled to the half-pay of Second Rates : but still more advantageous to the succeeding seniors, who, war or peace, employed or unemployed, were to receive the same.<sup>1</sup>

Leaving military affairs for a while, we must now consider some transactions that happened at home in his absence. In July 1696, while Captain Leake was employed with the Grand Fleet in the Soundings, his father died in the 68th year of his age, at Woolwich, where he was buried. Captain Leake was his only surviving son, besides whom, he had a daughter Elizabeth, whom he made whole and sole executrix of his Will, leaving to his son only one moiety of his books and instruments ; the other moiety to his daughter's son, by which it appears, his resentment for the ill-

<sup>1</sup> Cp. N.R.S., vol. xv, Appendix E.



success of his cushee-piece continued to the last ; though Captain Leake ever continued a most dutiful and affectionate son.

Upon the old man's death, Captain Leake's wife and friends, to whom he was as dear in private life, as valuable to all in his public station, without his consent or knowledge, from an earnest desire of having him at home, had procured for him his father's place of Master-Gunner of England and Storekeeper at Woolwich, by means of the following letter from Admiral Russell to the Lord Romney, Master-General of the Ordnance.

MY LORD,—I am desired by Captain Leake to recommend him to your Lordship's favour, to succeed his father, lately dead, who was Master-Gunner of England. He has been for many years his First Mate ; he is a man that I can answer for his knowledge in the art of gunnery, courage and fidelity ; at present he is captain of the *Ossory*, a very honest and good man ; thus far I can answer for on my own knowledge ; and a man that will be very diligent in his office. I must now ask your pardon for the trouble I have given you ; but would not refuse a friend, to recommend him to your favour ; I promise myself he will not fare the worse, since it comes from,

My Lord

Your Lordship's

Most faithful,

And Humble Servant,

CHIPPENHAM, *July* 28, 1696.

E. RUSSELL.

This letter shows Admiral Russell's opinion of Captain Leake, as well as his friendship for him ; but though he was pleased to find he had so good a friend, yet the thing itself was not at all agreeable, and therefore he was surprised, when he returned into harbour, to find himself

nominated Master-Gunner of England. He had, indeed, been one of the Master-Gunner's Mates ever since his father had been in that office, and a considerable time First Mate ; so that he had fair pretensions to succeed, if he had desired it ; but so far from it, that he had only kept the Mate's place out of complaisance to his father, designing to throw it up whenever he died, as he now actually did. He therefore handsomely excused himself from accepting the Master-Gunner's place, not only because it was a very troublesome office, but because it interfered with his pretensions in the Navy, where he was now a senior officer ; and he hoped that [ ]<sup>1</sup> would in time afford him a post more suitable, and equally advantageous on shore if he did not meet with the preferment he expected at sea.

Indeed, with the fatigues of nine years' war wherein he had not been one day out of commission, he might well desire a recess to enjoy a little domestic tranquillity with his family and friends ; but not like one who had no further expectations. For as by his bravery and conduct he had gained the applause of the public, so had he made many friends ; and he had no reason to doubt but they would serve him when occasion offered ; and he was resolved at least to wait the event some time. But men of active spirits must be employed. He had not been a twelve-month on shore, but he languished for employment ; especially, as the late war had not afforded him many opportunities to increase his fortune ; neither did he improve the few that had offered ; for being of a brave and generous disposition,

<sup>1</sup> It.

he did not consider so much to raise his fortune, as his reputation. Contrariwise, he whose mind is turned to get money, can hardly do a brave action ; and such a one may make an excellent trader, but can never make a good officer ; so difficult it is, honourably, to acquire a moderate fortune by the profession of arms with all its hazards and fatigues, which most other professions bring with ease and security ; whilst a military man, if he escapes with life and limb, in the same time, shall be hardly known for a little honour that fades as soon as the glittering arms are laid aside.<sup>1</sup>

The consideration, then, of making a better provision for his family than half-pay, and the uncertainty of another war, determined him to comply with the desires of his relations, and endeavour to procure some preferment in the civil branch of the Navy and quit the sea. What he had chiefly in view was to be a Commissioner of the Navy, a constant reward for senior captains, worn out in the service, or desirous to retire. And this he had good pretensions to, being one of the oldest captains upon the list. For this purpose he resolved to apply himself to those he accounted his friends, of which number were Admiral Russell, Sir George Rooke, and Sir Clowdisley Shovell ; but Admiral Churchill was more particularly so, and upon every occasion expressed a desire to serve him. This gentleman was brother to the Earl of Marlborough, and had a powerful interest.

<sup>1</sup> *Sc.* It does not take the mercenary man many years to amass a small fortune. But in the same interval of time, the warrior (carrying his life in his hand) will acquire nothing beyond a glitter of fame which fades as quickly as it's culled.



He had a great personal esteem for Captain Leake ever since the battle of La Hogue, where he bravely sustained him after the ship between them had been beaten out of the line ; and from that, and other instances of his conduct and behaviour, Mr. Churchill had fixed his eye upon him, as upon one formed by nature to perform great actions by sea. To Mr. Churchill Captain Leake first opened his design of applying to be a Commissioner of the Navy ; but instead of giving him encouragement to proceed, he wholly dissuaded him from it. He told him it was time enough to think of that, when he was incapable of further service at sea, or had been disappointed in his promotion ; that probably the peace might not continue long ; if it did, he would be a Flag in his turn, and that was not far off ; and, in the meantime, he would endeavour to get him a ship ; but he would not by any means have him think of quitting the Navy to be a Commissioner, for he hoped he was reserved for something more to his own and his country's honour. The advice and encouragement of so good a friend, determined him to wait with patience ; but it happened his patience was not long put to the trial, for Mr. Churchill being shortly after appointed one of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, soon brought Mr. Leake into action ; and the 5th of May 1699, he was commissioned for the Kent, a Third Rate of 70 guns, at Deptford.

The 26th he fell down to the Hope, and having taken on board some soldiers with their officers, to recruit the regiments in Ireland, he sailed for the Downs, and joined the squadron under the command of Rear-Admiral Hopsonn. The 2nd of

August they sailed for Ireland ; but, by reason of turbulent and hazy weather, were forced into Torbay four days after. They left Torbay the 12th, but with contrary winds and very foggy weather ; and, plying to windward, on the 20th coming in with the land, they found themselves before Cork ; and, coming to an anchor in that harbour, disembarked the soldiers. Leaving that place the 28th, with a fair wind, they arrived in the Downs the 1st of September. They did not continue long here ; for on the 6th they received orders to go for Portsmouth, and weighing immediately, came two days afterwards to Spithead. The 10th Rear-Admiral Hopsonn hoisted his flag on board the *Kent*, continuing there till the 11th of November. The 27th Captain Leake hoisted a distinguishing pendant at Spithead, as Commander-in-Chief of the ships in that harbour, and continued at that place till the 1st of February when he received orders to go to Chatham. He sailed the next day and the following anchored in the Downs, from whence he sailed for Chatham two days after ; and the 22nd the *Kent* was put out of commission.

After this Captain Leake continued a year out of commission, when the times seemed to promise an occasion for further service ; for, though it was not believed a war would break out with France so soon as it did, yet there was a suspicion, the beginning of the year 1701, that the French had a design to make a descent upon England. Orders were therefore given to assemble a fleet, and Captain Leake was appointed to command the *Berwick*, a Third Rate of 70 guns, in Chatham harbour. He entered on board her the 28th of February 1700-1 ; and finding the

ship ready manned and under sailing orders, he soon left that place and anchored in the Downs the 28th of March. Shortly after he came to Spithead; but, finding the ship very foul, he went into the harbour to clean; and she was in such a bad condition that she did not get out again till the 2nd of July.

The 19th of August he joined the fleet under Sir George Rooke, bound down the Channel; and they anchored in Torbay; from whence they sailed the 26th following; but were no sooner clear of the land, than a storm obliged them to turn. They sailed again the 29th, stretching off the Fourn Head,<sup>1</sup> near the Isle of Ushant, where they cruised till the middle of September; and then leaving that station, they beat for several days between the Start and Plymouth, till the 10th of October; when, the signal being made to separate, Captain Leake sailed directly for Spithead, and arrived there the 23rd of November, continuing at that place till the 19th of January, 1701-2, when the Berwick was put out of commission.

In the meantime some events had happened during this cruise that made a war unavoidable. For, upon the death of King James (which happened at St. Germain's the 16th of September) the French King acknowledged and declared the titular Prince of Wales King of England Scotland and Ireland, which was so great an insult to the King and the whole nation, that His Majesty immediately recalled his Ambassador from that Court, and ordered the French Minister home.

<sup>1</sup> 'Fowne Head,' author's spelling; Lat. 48.30 N., Long. 4.45 W.



And the Parliament resented this indignity so highly that they addressed His Majesty, that no peace might be made till His Majesty and the nation had reparation for the affront.

That these vigorous resolutions might effectually be carried into execution and the declaration of war be immediately followed by some notable action, uncommon pains was taken to get a strong fleet ready with a large body of land-forces for an expedition to Cadiz, in conjunction with the Dutch, and under the command of the Earl of Pembroke, who, for that purpose, was appointed Lord High Admiral.<sup>1</sup> And this was done that the command both of the land and sea forces might be in one person, it having been found by experience that most expeditions, where they have been under separate commands, have miscarried by their disagreement; as indeed it afterwards proved in this expedition to Cadiz. Whereas, had it been carried on in the manner at first intended, it would in all probability have succeeded.

As the Lord High Admiral was no seaman, it was absolutely necessary to have the officers immediately under him to be persons of experience and of approved conduct and fidelity; and upon this score, Admiral Churchill recommended Captain Leake to his lordship as the fittest person for his purpose. The Lord High Admiral, therefore,

<sup>1</sup> Thomas Herbert, eighth earl of that creation; born 1656; educated at Christ Church, Oxford; succeeded, 1683; served the crown with fidelity and spirit against Monmouth; first lord of the Admiralty and one of Queen Mary's Council, 1690; Lord Privy Seal, 1692; first plenipotentiary at the treaty of Ryswick, 1697; accepted the dedication of Locke's *Essay on the Human Understanding*.

having made choice of the *Britannia*, the finest First Rate in England, to go to sea in, and having, as usual, appointed three captains to command her under himself, did Captain Leake the honour to make him his First Captain, by commission the 22nd of January 1701-2, three days after his former ship the *Berwick* had been paid off.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> On this point there seems to be a conflict of opinion. For of George Byng, afterwards first Viscount Torrington, it is written (*Camden Society's Publications*, New Series, vol. xlvii, pp. 66-7), 'An expedition was intended to Cadiz in conjunction with the Dutch. The Earl of Pembroke was fully bent upon going to sea and commanding in person, though neither a seaman or a soldier, and which the present ministry neither intended or had any liking to, but knew not how to prevent. At the same time the Junto were desirous that Capt. Byng should be his first secretary and likewise his First Captain at sea, as the person to be with him they could most confide in. The first of these stations was considerable. Yet he excused himself from accepting it, as not thinking himself fully qualified for it, or that he could well discharge a post of that nature, desiring that he might remain only the First Captain to the Lord Admiral. But they, particularly the Earl of Orford, Lord Sunderland and Mr. Priestman, insisting it might be as they had concerted it, he was declared by the King to both those employments, though Captain Leake was the person the Earl of Pembroke designed for his first captain. At the King's levee my Lord Marlborough was the first to wish him joy, passing the King at the chimney fire to come to him, telling him that amongst all his friends none rejoiced more than himself.'

The explanation of the discrepancy may possibly emerge from a comparison of dates. Lord Pembroke appointed Leake on January 22. Lord Orford persuaded the King to substitute his own nominee on March 1. A week later (March 8) William III died; and, on the accession of Queen Anne, the post of Lord High Admiral was transferred to her consort, Prince George of Denmark. Lord Pembroke's retirement involved a complete change of staff; and there would therefore be neither necessity nor time to revoke Captain

'There were,' says Mr. Burchett, 'some doubts whether his lordship should have borne at the main topmast head the Royal Standard of England, or the Union ..... Flag' worn by the Admiral of the Fleet. Some inclined to think the latter; but having (says he) 'an original journal kept by the secretary to the Duke of Buckingham, Lord High Admiral in the expedition to the Isle of Rhé, it plainly appears thereby that he bore the Standard, as several High Admirals had done before.'<sup>1</sup> But this is further exemplified in a book, entitled, *Colloquia Maritima*,<sup>2</sup> which was published some

Leake's commission. See Charnock, *Biographia Navalis*, ii, 169.

<sup>1</sup> 'There were some doubts whether his Lordship should have borne at the main topmast head the Royal Standard of England or the Union (or more properly speaking in the maritime phrase the "Jack") Flag, commonly worn by those who have (under the Lord High Admiral) been appointed Admirals of the Fleet. Most of those who pretended to judge best of this affair inclined to the latter. But I luckily having then in my possession an Original Journal (kept by the Secretary to the Duke of Buckingham in his expedition to the Isle of Rhé), it plainly appeared thereby that he bore the Standard, as several High Admirals had done before by particular Warrants (as it is presumed) from the Crown empowering them to do so.' Burchett, p. 619. See *Mariner's Mirror*, vol. i, p. 34, *The Union Flag* by Lieut.-Col. W. G. Perrin, O.B.E., and p. 98, *The Union Flag* by Rear-Admiral Sir R. Massie Blomfield, K.C.M.G. Colonel Perrin's article gives a further list of references.

It is worthy of notice that in the pictures of the Third Dutch War (published by N.R.S. in 1907), Commander-in-Chief, H.R.H. the Duke of York (who was also Lord High Admiral) wears the Standard at Solebay in 1672, whereas Commander-in-Chief H.R.H. the Prince Rupert (who was not Lord High Admiral) wears the Union at the Texel in 1673.

<sup>2</sup> London. 8vo. 1688.



years before, by Captain Boteler, a commander of great judgment and experience in naval affairs.<sup>1</sup> 'Whenever,' says he, 'the Prince is in person (or his High Admiral in his room) there is carried out on the main-top of the Admiral's ship, where he himself is, the Standard Royal which is the arms of his kingdom. Nevertheless, as it is in the power of the Prince to transfer his favours at pleasure, so in my time, I once saw this Standard carried out during a whole voyage, when neither of both were present. But (as I take it) it was a grace extraordinary, and cannot be challenged by any General (*quatenus* a General) though of a Royal Fleet, save only of the High and Chief Admiral.'

But whilst everything was in a manner ready for his lordship's reception, the death of King William which happened on the 8th of March, 1701-2, and Her Majesty Queen Anne's accession to the throne, put an end to his lordship's intended voyage, though not to the expedition. However, Captain Leake continued in his station of First Captain till the 27th of May, 1702, when the Earl of Pembroke was removed to make way for His Royal Highness Prince George of Denmark, Her Majesty's consort, whom she declared Lord

<sup>1</sup> Captain Nathaniel Boteler (or Butler), who commanded a ship in the disastrous expeditions to Cadiz and Rhé, wrote his *Six Dialogues about Sea Services between an High Admiral and a Captain at Sea* in 1634. There are two autograph copies among the Sloane MSS. and a transcript among the Harleian MSS. A badly edited version appeared in print in 1685. Mr. L. G. Carr Laughton has pointed out (*Mariner's Mirror*, vol. i, p. 86) that Sotheby's catalogue of the library of Mr. John Scott (1905) calls the edition of 1688 by the same name as that of 1685. Stratico, however, gives to the second edition the title as above.

High Admiral, and Generalissimo of sea and land.

By this means Captain Leake had been raised to the highest station as a captain ; and, if I am not mistaken, higher than any private captain ever before attained. For, not to look for precedents of that kind before the Restoration, when the economy of the fleet was but in its infancy, Penn, who was First Captain to the Duke of York, Lord High Admiral, was a Vice-Admiral at that time ; and we have had no instance since of a Lord High Admiral at sea. Only the Earl of Berkeley, in the year 1719, being then Vice-Admiral of Great Britain and First Lord Commissioner of the Admiralty,<sup>1</sup> endeavoured to come as near as possible (both in power and state) ; and, by particular warrant from the Crown, hoisted the Lord High Admiral's Flag, as it is called (the first time, I believe, it was ever worn in command at sea), and had three captains appointed under him, as a Lord High Admiral—Littleton, then Vice-Admiral of the White, being his First Captain. Indeed, if we consider that the first of the two captains allowed the Admiral of the Fleet has both the rank and pay of a Rear-Admiral for the honour of that flag, it follows that, as the Lord High Admiral bears the Royal Standard (which immediately represents the King's Majesty) and therefore (for the honour thereof) has three Captains (the second of whom ranks with the First Captain to the Admiral of the

<sup>1</sup> Rear-Admiral Sir R. Massie Blomfield, K.C.M.G., in his article on *Naval Executive Ranks* (*Mariner's Mirror*, vol. ii, p. 112) says, 'Sir George Rooke was the last "Vice-Admiral of England".' Sir George Rooke died January 24, 1709.

Fleet) the first, should, in proportion, be not less than a Rear-, if not a Vice-Flag, as the practice justifies. But I do not find any settlement of the rank or pay of such an officer. In the present case, the First and Second Captains both received Rear-Admiral's pay by warrant from the Lord High Admiral. But probably there might be some extraordinary allowance to the First Captain.

Notwithstanding Captain Leake's promotion to so high a station, the same day he was discharged from that post he took the command of the Association, a Second Rate. This was, indeed, going backward ; but there being no pay peculiar to the First Captain of a Lord High Admiral and consequently no half-pay, as there was to the First Captain to the Admiral of the Fleet, he chose to accept of a command<sup>1</sup> till an opportunity offered for his promotion. This happened very soon ; for, three weeks afterwards, he was appointed commander of a squadron to Newfoundland, which, with other subsequent transactions, will be the subject of the following books ; wherein, as I have the advantage of better materials, I shall be as particular as may be, without prolixity.

Having now finished what I proposed in the first book, namely ' The Life and Actions of Sir John Leake as Captain,' I should here conclude ; but having, in the second chapter given an account of the Rise and Progress of the Navy, with the condition of it, at the beginning of the war, I think it proper to show the increase of it during the war, and the state thereof at King William's death.

<sup>1</sup> An active command.



THE GENERAL STATE OF THE ROYAL NAVY,  
from the 5th of November 1688 to the 1st of January 1698.

		Rates					
		1	2	3	4	5	6
Remain on the 5th of November 1688		9	11	39	41	2	6
Increase	Bought and built	0	4	23	44	33	22
	Taken from the French	0	0	1	2	9	15
		9	15	63	87	44	43
Decrease	Burnt and blown up	1	0	2	0	0	0
	Cast away	0	2	6	10	7	5
	Taken or destroyed by the French	0	0	2	9	10	8
	Presented by <sup>1</sup> the Czar of Muscovy	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Cast as irreparable, sold, broken up, and laid to secure Docks and Graving Places	0	1	0	3	12	13
		1	3	10	22	29	27
Forty-four ships altered in their Rates and sorts, which are thus adjusted, viz.		8	12	53	65	15	16
	Taken off	2	0	8	9	2	1
	Set on	0	2	0	8	20	3
Remain on the 1st of January 1698		6	14	45	64	33 <sup>2</sup>	18
Total of Ships in the Navy Royal in the year 1702		7	14	47	61 <sup>3</sup>	30	15

<sup>1</sup> To.<sup>2</sup> Derrick's *Memoirs* gives the figure as 34.<sup>3</sup> Derrick gives 62.

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By this account, allowing the decrease of two First Rates to be made up by the addition of two Second Rates, the increase of the Navy during King William's reign, will be one Second Rate, eight Third Rates, twenty Fourth Rates, twenty-eight Fifth Rates, and nine Sixth Rates, besides smaller vessels; but reckoning by tonnage, including small and great, the increase will appear much greater.

	Tons
Navy Royal in May, 1660 . . . .	62,594
Navy Royal in December, 1688 . . . .	<u>101,032</u>
Increase from 1660 to 1688 . . . .	<u>38,438</u>
Navy Royal in December, 1688 . . . .	101,032
Navy Royal in December, 1702 . . . .	<u>158,992</u>
Increase from 1688 to 1702 . . . .	<u>57,960<sup>1</sup></u>

But having mentioned, in this account, the decrease of our Navy, by ships taken and destroyed by the French, during the war, I must, in justice to my country, observe that the enemy's loss was double to ours; for, by Mr. Burchett's account, our whole loss amounted to no more than 1112 guns; whereas that of the French amounted to 2244, and those much larger.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The following list has been compiled from Derrick's *Memoirs of the Rise and Progress of the Royal Navy*, pp. 83-117.

	Tons
Navy Royal in 1660 . . . . .	57,463
Navy Royal in 1688 . . . . .	<u>101,892</u>
Increase from 1660 to 1688 . . . . .	<u>44,429</u>
Navy Royal in 1688 . . . . .	101,892
Navy Royal in 1702 . . . . .	<u>159,020</u>
Increase from 1688 to 1702 . . . . .	<u>57,128</u>

<sup>2</sup> For details of losses see Burchett, pp. 573-4.

#### NOTE TO BOOK I, CHAPTER VII.

Whatever value we attach to the story told in *The Memoirs relating to the Lord Torrington* (see above, p. 77 n.), it is at least certain that the subject of this biography was actually in command of the *Britannia* during the early months of 1701-2; for Mr. R. G. Marsden has discovered in the Record Office 'The Log of the *Britannia*, Captain John Leake,' P.R.O., Admiralty, Masters' Logs, 16.



## BOOK II



## BOOK II

### CHAPTER I

*Captain Leake is appointed Commodore of a squadron to Newfoundland. He proceeds thither, destroys the French trade and settlements there and returns to England.*

WE are now entering upon a period of time that will be ever famous in History for reducing the mighty power of France and thereby securing the liberties of Europe, a work reserved for the glorious reign of Queen Anne, under whose auspicious influence the military glory of Great Britain (both by sea and land) was carried to the utmost height, and for nine successive years—an uninterrupted series of victories and triumphs over an enemy till then formidable in all Europe. But in particular, our naval power was remarkably conspicuous in this war. For though it was not at all increased in strength,<sup>1</sup> our success was much greater than in the former war. Our land achievements were indeed great

<sup>1</sup> Compare, however, Derrick, pp. 117-25.

			Tons
Navy Royal at accession of Queen Anne	.	.	159,020
Navy Royal at death of Queen Anne	.	.	167,219
			<hr/>
Increase	.	.	8,199
			<hr/>



and glorious ; but our naval successes were permanent and lasting. By sea we conquered France and secured our naval dominion by important conquests, the happy effects of which we feel at this day.<sup>1</sup>

At the conclusion of the last book we left the British nation under a just resentment for the indignity offered by the French King in acknowledging and declaring the pretended Prince of Wales, King of England ; and with a brave resolution not to make peace till ample satisfaction was made for the affront. And for this end vigorous preparations were making for a new war against the mighty tyrant, who, during that short Peace (which he never meant to continue longer than till his projects were ripe to break it) having now accumulated his strength, pulled off the mask to make a vigorous push once more for universal monarchy. This was therefore the last struggle for our honour and our liberty, and consequently required such a vigorous resolution, as a British Parliament inspired, not to sheath the Sword till that haughty monarch was humbled and brought to reason.

Her Majesty therefore, at her accession to the throne, made her first declaration to her Council a declaration of war, by acquainting them she designed to carry on all the preparations that were making against France ; and pursuant thereto, war was proclaimed against France and Spain the 14th of May, 1702.

In this war, the nation lay under the greatest discouragement, having maintained a long and expensive war, so lately, with so little success. Queen Anne likewise laboured under great

<sup>1</sup> 1750.

difficulties which King William did not. For whereas, during the late war with France, we had Spain as an ally and their ports to harbour and refit our fleets ; now, a Prince of the house of Bourbon was upon the throne of Spain ; and we had the united force of both those powerful kingdoms to contend with. The Duke of Savoy too had declared for France ;<sup>1</sup> and it was to be doubted whether we could persuade the King of Portugal to break his late engagements with the French King ; so that we had no harbour in the Mediterranean, or those parts, and were reduced to the hard necessity of courting the friendship of Portugal, otherwise very inconsiderable : and it was a year after the war begun, before they could be prevailed upon to come into the Grand Alliance. Our allies the Dutch too, did neither furnish so large a proportion of shipping, nor perform what they agreed to do as they had done the last war ; so that the whole brunt of the war by sea fell upon the English. But these disadvantages made the event so much the more glorious.

The Earl of Pembroke having been removed from the post of Lord High Admiral to make way for His Royal Highness Prince George of Denmark Her Majesty's consort, and Captain Leake's commission as First Captain to his lordship being thereby become void, he had been appointed commander of the Association, a Second Rate ship, till an opportunity offered for his further

<sup>1</sup> The War of the Spanish Succession began in Italy. By a treaty between the French and the Duke of Savoy in the spring of 1701 a road to the Milanese was opened for the soldiers of Louis XIV. In the summer of 1703, however, the opinion of Victor Amadeus underwent a change ; and, desiring to be upon the winning side, he joined the Grand Alliance.

promotion, as we observed before. There were then but five Captains upon the list his seniors, of whom one or two only expected Flags; for, as yet, the custom of preferment according to seniority was in use, unless postponed on account of some misbehaviour or incapacity in the person, and then with good reason; for he who cannot command a single ship as he ought is not fit to be trusted with a squadron. The rule else was so strictly observed that the First Captain to the Admiral of the Fleet, though allowed the rank and pay of a Rear-Admiral, was not advanced to a Flag the sooner upon that account (as has been the modern practice). For Captain Byng, afterwards Sir George Byng, having been First Captain to Admiral Russell in the year 1695 and upon Rear-Admiral's half-pay as First Captain, nevertheless was afterwards a private Captain, and so continued, till his superiors were made Flags.<sup>1</sup> Captain Leake is another instance, in a higher degree, who having been First Captain to the Lord High Admiral, was not promoted to be a Flag-Officer, till Captain Graydon, the Captain next before him, was made a Rear-Admiral, and it came to his turn by seniority.

The 23rd of May, His Royal Highness appointed Sir George Rooke, Sir David Mitchell, George Churchill, Esq. and Robert Hill, Esq. his Council, as Lord High Admiral. The three first of these were Captain Leake's friends, but particularly Mr. Churchill, who besides was of the bedchamber to his Royal Highness, and very much in favour. He therefore had it more immediately in his power to serve Captain Leake, and he soon found

<sup>1</sup> Camden Society's Publications, New Series, vol. xlvii, pp. 66, 85-7.



an opportunity to do it ; for the 9th of June he sent him the following letter.

SIR,—I have proposed to the Prince, your going to command a squadron to Newfoundland ; you will be a Chief de Squadron ;<sup>1</sup> I hope it will be agreeable to you. I desire you would keep this to yourself, and let me hear from you by the next post.

I am your friend and servant,  
GEORGE CHURCHILL.

And the 18th he was informed by a letter from Mr. Clarke, His Highness's Secretary, that he was appointed Commander-in-Chief to Newfoundland, with power to wear a distinguishing Pendant ; that his commission would be sent to him very soon, and that he gave him this

<sup>1</sup> When the First Dutch War broke out in 1652, the Dutch, unwilling to create new Admirals sufficient for their needs, introduced for the use of captains detached upon squadronal duties the rank of 'Commander.' In place of a 'flag' the Commander was directed to wear a 'broad pendant.'

The rank was introduced into England by William III and continued to be used together with the distinguishing pendant from his time onwards. The word was at first spelled 'Commandore,' but this was quickly corrupted into 'Commadore.' The title, however, though adopted and found useful, was not at once officially sanctioned. Attempts to obtain recognition, indeed, were made without avail in 1731 and 1747 ; and not until 1805 was the reluctance of the Admiralty finally overcome. Dislike was probably prompted by a fear that young captains would obtain promotion over the heads of their seniors.

The official distrust of the unsanctioned word is here amusingly illustrated by the Admiralty's preference for an incomplete translation of the French phrase *Chef d'Escadre*. But our author, as will be seen, uses the word Commodore, though in the original he adopts the spelling 'Commadore,' which persisted until after 1750. See *Naval Executive Ranks*, by Rear-Admiral Sir R. Massie Blomfield, K.C.M.G., *Mariner's Mirror*, vol. iv, p. 72.

notice, that he might prepare himself in the meantime for his voyage.

Newfoundland is an island in North America as large as England, situated between the 46th and 53rd degree of north latitude, but not so valuable in itself, as for the extraordinary fishing carried on upon the shoals or banks contiguous to it, and from thence called the Banks of Newfoundland; the island being of little use but to prepare and dry the fish upon, and to afford harbours for the shipping, which assemble there in great numbers at the fishing-season. King Charles II was the first that allowed the French to settle there; who, being very sensible of the advantages to be drawn from thence, possessed themselves of the best part of the island, and strengthened themselves with fortifications, and soon became too strong for us; and in the year 1696 destroyed all our settlements there. By the Peace of Ryswick they were obliged to give up all the settlements on the south side of the island; and soon after King William sent a squadron with some land-forces, who made a fort at St. John's, one of the best harbours, and left a garrison there. This was the only settlement of any strength we had there at this time, and the French being become very strong, and continually encroaching, even in time of peace, it was not to be doubted but they would take the first opportunity at the opening of the war wholly to dispossess us of the island and thereby secure that advantageous branch of trade to themselves. It was therefore absolutely necessary to send a squadron thither early in the fishing season, to secure our footing there and annoy the enemy.

On the 24th of June Captain Leake received his commission, appointing him Commander-in-

Chief of the ships designed for Newfoundland, and likewise Instructions from His Royal Highness to proceed thither with the said squadron, and to convoy the trade bound to Virginia and New England as far as his and their way should lie together. He was required to use his utmost endeavours to get an account of the strength of the enemy and forts at Newfoundland, and not only to annoy them there in their fishing harbours and at sea ; but to assist the ' Admirals, Vice-Admirals, and Rear-Admirals ' at our ports and harbours in those parts : for by these titles the Masters of the Merchant ships, who first arrive, distinguish themselves, and have command over others at the respective places, when there are not any ships of war present.

He had also particular Instructions for convoying the trade from thence when they should have made their voyages, and to inform himself as to the several Heads of Enquiry, transmitted to the Lord High Admiral by the Lords of the Council for Trade and Plantations (a thing usual when any ships are sent thither) in relation to the circumstances of our affairs in that country, and particularly the Fishery. These orders were accompanied with a warrant empowering him to hold Courts Martial, and an order to wear a distinguishing pendant on this service.

He had likewise a commission appointing him Governor of the Island, and Commander-in-Chief of the land-forces, during the time he should be at Newfoundland ; for the Commander-in-Chief of the King's ships at that place is always Governor of the Island whilst he is there.

In pursuance of his orders for convoying the trade, he immediately sent letters to the several post masters as far as Falmouth to give notice



to all merchant ships bound that way, and dispatched orders to the Captains of the Exeter, Assistance, Reserve, and Shark sloop (which were to make a part of his squadron) to use their utmost diligence to get their ships ready to sail, that he might not lose the first opportunity of the wind. The 28th he received the Lord High Admiral's orders to send a ship to Poole to fetch from thence a storeship; and accordingly he detached the Reserve upon that service. The 1st of July, he had His Highness's orders to call at Plymouth for the Montagu and Lichfield, and likewise to take the Medway and Firebrand fireships at Spithead to proceed with him. Two days after, the Reserve returned, having performed the service she was sent upon, and also brought with her three vessels bound for Newfoundland; and the next day he dispatched the same ship to the several ports to get out the rest of the merchant ships that were to proceed with him.

Whilst he lay at Spithead he assisted at several Courts Martial, one of which was upon the trial of Sir John Munden, who was acquitted.<sup>1</sup> In the meantime having run out to St. Helens, and delivered to the masters of the merchant ships Sailing Instructions; the 16th of July he weighed again

<sup>1</sup> Rear-Admiral Sir John Munden was selected for the first important naval operation in the War of the Spanish Succession. He was an officer of tried courage and resource and was instructed to intercept and capture a squadron under du Casse that was known to be cruising off Coruña. The French escaped his snares, and by superior sailing qualities reached the safety of their anchorage. Munden was recalled, tried by Court Martial, and honourably acquitted. The Government, however, yielded to the insensate clamour of the mob, and dismissed him from their service a few days later. He retired into obscurity and died in 1719. See Burchett, book v, chapter viii.

at midnight, and next day was off Portland, and the 20th anchored near Torbay. At eleven at night he sailed again, and the next morning anchored in Plymouth Sound, where he found the Montagu and Lichfield. The following morning he endeavoured to sail, but was obliged to anchor again about noon, the merchant ships not being got out of Catwater, though he had taken all proper measures to have them ready. But in the evening he got under sail with the Trade<sup>1</sup> and the squadron under his command, consisting of the Exeter, a Fourth Rate of 60 guns (wherein he was himself), the Lichfield, Medway, Reserve, Montagu, and Assistance, Fourth Rates of 50 guns each, the Loo and the Charles galley of 32 guns each, the Firebrand fireship, and the Shark sloop.

The 25th Commodore Leake hoisted his distinguishing pendant, being clear of the land; and three days after parted with the merchant ships about 106 leagues W.S.W. from the Lizard, leaving them under convoy of the Looe, Reserve, and Firebrand fireship; whilst himself with the rest of the squadron made the best of their way for Newfoundland, in order to surprise the enemy, if possible, before they could have any apprehensions of his coming.

On the 14th of August, then being in Lat. 45.15 N. he dispatched the Shark sloop with the Queen's packets for New England. The 22nd they had hard gales, that the Charles Galley lost her mainmast, and the Commodore and the rest of the squadron split their sails. The next day they had soundings upon the Banks, and the 26th in the morning they discovered the land, and the next day, in the morning, were off the Bay of Bulls. Soon

<sup>1</sup> *Sc. Merchantmen.*

after, Captain Studley, the Admiral of that harbour, came on board the Commodore, by whom he<sup>1</sup> was informed that there were two ships loading at Trepassy, and two other French ships of war at Placentia, and that most of their fishing vessels, which had made their voyages, were gone thither for convoy; that the French kept men upon the hills, over the Bay of Bulls, who, upon the arrival of any ships, immediately retired to give notice to them at Placentia, to which place it was about three days' journey.

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Upon this intelligence, without staying to anchor, Commodore Leake proceeded that very evening to the southward of Placentia Bay. The 28th he took a small ship from Martinique bound to Placentia, and soon after, seeing four sail off Cape Pine, he ordered the Montagu and Lichfield to chase them, whilst himself plied in for Trepassy where he saw two French ships, which about noon he took. In the afternoon he stood out of Trepassy, and was joined at night by the Lichfield with two of the four French ships he had chased. The 29th in the morning, off of St. Mary's, he chased a French fly-boat, which in about two hours he came up with and took. About ten o'clock he bore away for St. Mary's, and at noon was joined by the Montagu with three French prizes; and having ordered the Medway, Lichfield, and Charles Galley for Collonet Bay, three leagues from St. Mary's, himself with the rest of the squadron stood away for St. Mary's, where he anchored in the afternoon, and found a French fly-boat, which, upon his approach, the enemy run ashore. Hereupon the Commodore ordered all the boats manned and

<sup>1</sup> Leake.



armed, to attempt to get her off, which with some difficulty they performed. Soon after landing their men, they drove the French from the place, burning and destroying all the houses, together with all their stages for building ships, all their shallops and boats, some vessels that were already built, and others near finished, with everything belonging to them. And having entirely destroyed that settlement, he left the place at night, leaving the Assistance and Charles Galley, to proceed with the prizes to St. John's.

The next day he took a French fly-boat in Collonet Bay; and, having landed his men at Collonet, he entirely destroyed it, as he had done to that of Trepassy.<sup>1</sup> His prize he dispatched under the same convoy as the former prizes at St. Mary's, with orders to those two commanders, when they had seen the prizes into St. John's, to cruise off Cape Race and the Banks for fourteen days. With the rest of the squadron he proceeded towards St. Lawrence and the island of St. Peter's<sup>2</sup> (both of them very considerable settlements of the French at the entrance of Fortune Bay). Being off of St. Lawrence, he discovered three sail, whereupon he left the Montagu and Medway to endeavour to get them out; and then to follow him to St. Peter's.

The 1st of September, in the morning, he was fair in with St. Peter's, with an intention of going into that harbour, but it blowing hard and likely to be bad weather, that it would be difficult to ride with a spring upon their cable, if they should meet with any opposition, as also a narrow harbour, and the ground without it very broken that the least miscarriage in anchoring

<sup>1</sup> See p. 103.

<sup>2</sup> Now St. Pierre.

might endanger them, the Commodore thought it advisable not to attempt going in till fairer weather.

Accordingly he stood off from the shore ; but by good fortune, next morning, there being a fine breeze, they made in for the harbour, as they thought, and saw eight ships and small vessels off of the easternmost point of the island, to which giving chase, they found the pilot had been under a mistake, for the Commodore discovered the harbour was on that side, and in it seven or eight ships at anchor ; so that had the weather been proper, and he had borne away the morning before for the place the pilots had always taken for the entrance of the harbour, he would not only have run the hazard of being driven to leeward of the island, but also of falling on a ledge of rocks, which lay off the westernmost end of the island. At noon he took one of the ships, laden with fish, and leaving the Lichfield in chase of another, himself tacked and plied in for the harbour, to secure the rest. But when he was within a quarter of a mile of the entrance, he discovered four sail, endeavouring to make their escape from the South Channel, which the pilots had affirmed to him was not navigable for any vessel that drew above five or six feet water : and observing that the rest loosed their topsails to go out the same way, he concluded they were very small ships, and thought it to no purpose to chase them, for it was then about seven at night, and the wind right out of the harbour, which was not above half a mile over, and a dangerous rock in the middle of it, which appeared a very little above water ; so that there was no attempting to turn in. Whereupon he drove under his topsails till it was dark, the better to amuse the enemy,

but his real design was to stand for the South Channel to intercept them, had not the haziness of the weather prevented him ; by which means they escaped, except one laden with salt, taken by the Lichfield. In the morning he plied in for the shore to look into the harbour, and by four in the afternoon was within a league and a half of it, but only saw two small vessels there. It continuing to blow hard, and all the enemy's ships being got out of the harbour, he bore up to join the Lichfield, which he did in the evening.

He kept plying to windward with an easy sail all night, and in the morning, being the 4th of September, he bore away for St. Lawrence, to join the Montagu and Medway, of whose safety he was in some doubt, not having heard from them in all this time. At eleven o'clock he joined the former, who acquainted him that he parted from the Medway the night before, who was gone with four prizes to St. John's, two of which were part of them that escaped from St. Peter's, and the other two were taken at Great St. Lawrence ; that they had likewise burnt two sail at Little St. Lawrence, and destroyed all the houses, boats, stages, &c. at both those places, where they had been detained by contrary winds which was the reason they had not joined him before. It was then agreed to bear away for St. John's, in order to go to Chapeau Rouge, on the north part of Newfoundland.

They arrived at St. John's the 7th of September, where they found the Medway, Assistance, Charles Galley, Looe and Firebrand fireship ; the two latter having seen their convoys to the several places to which they were bound, and the Reserve was gone, pursuant to the Commodore's orders,



to survey the harbours of Trinity and Carbonear.<sup>1</sup> Next day the Commodore sailed from St. John's, with the Montagu, Lichfield, Assistance, and Looe, in order to visit Bonavista, the most northern plantation we had in those parts, where he judged he might most probably be furnished with pilots for Chapeau Rouge; the rest of the squadron, viz. the Medway, Charles Galley, and the fireship, he left with orders to go to St. Peter's and destroy what they could meet with in that harbour, and then to cruise off of Cape Race and the banks of Newfoundland, until the 25th of the aforesaid month of September.

He arrived at Bonavista the 12th, and sent ashore for pilots, whilst in the meantime he kept plying in for the bay, and lay by all night, in which time several islands of ice passed by them, and it blew so hard, that he split his main top-sail, and fore-sail, and sprung his main-mast. In the morning the boat came off with a pilot, and upon examination of his knowledge of the northern coast, it was found he had been several voyages in boats, but was not acquainted with any of the harbours, only by having passed in and out, without sounding the depth of water; nor did he pretend to know the land at a distance, or any danger lying off the shore. So it was concluded to return to St. John's, it being of dangerous consequence to proceed any farther northerly, so late in the year, dark nights, and without the assistance of experienced pilots; all the ships being in great want of water and wood. Accordingly he made the best of his way for St. John's, where he arrived the 14th of September. At St. John's he was informed by a

<sup>1</sup> Lat. 47.40 N., Long. 53.20 W.

pilot of the country that, although he did not well know Chapeau Rouge, he was acquainted with several good harbours the French had northward, but nevertheless refused to carry the ships thither, because the winter season was so far advanced. They had, as he said, no forts there, nor other defence, than what the merchant ships made with their guns, to secure them from the Indians (while they were fishing) who treat the Christians barbarously when they fall into their hands. Nor were there to the northward, as he said, any other fortifications than that of St. Peter's, and even that but a small fort, of no more than six guns; so that indeed, had there been the best pilots they could have desired, it would only have been lost time, and running a very great hazard to have gone thither.

The 19th of September the Reserve came in from surveying the harbours of Trinity and Carbonear, and the 2nd of October the Medway and Charles Galley (with a small banker the latter had taken) came in from St. Peter's, the fort whereof they had demolished, and burned and spoiled the enemy's habitations, boats and stages, and entirely destroyed that settlement. There now only remained to convoy the trade to Europe. Whereupon the Montagu and Looe were appointed to convoy the ships bound to Portugal; the Reserve, Charles Galley, and Firebrand fireship, those for England; and with the rest of the squadron, when the trade was ready to sail, the Commodore determined to proceed to Cape Race, and thence into the latitude of 45 degrees, and there cruise ten days to intercept the ships from Placentia, knowing they must make their voyage homewards in a few

days. And one of the French prizes he appointed [ ]<sup>1</sup> the prisoners to carry them to France, which he did, as well to lengthen out the provisions, as to keep the ships' companies from distempers.

In consequence of these resolutions, Commodore Leake sailed from St. John's the 11th of October, with the *Exeter*, *Medway*, *Assistance*, and *Lichfield*, leaving the rest of the squadron to convoy the trade, as beforementioned; and two days after, he got to the rendez-vous which was south by east from Cape Race, between the latitude of 44 and 45 degrees. From the 17th to the 20th it blew a violent storm, that having split their sails, they were forced to lay a-try under their mizzen, in which time a French banker was taken. On the 20th, one of the *Placentia* ships was taken, the master of which acquainted the Commodore, that he was separated in a storm from the rest of the fleet, which were about forty sail under convoy of one man-of-war of 50 guns; and the Commodore, by what he gathered from the said master, believing that part of the fleet was eastward from him, he made the best of his way in quest of them. Accordingly, on the 21st, he came up with and took four French bankers, and soon after another of the *Placentia* fleet. The 26th and 31st two more of the *Placentia* fleet were taken, whose masters confirming what the other had reported, the Commodore intended to have kept his course southward, in order to intercept the rest of them; but meeting with strong winds at south-east and south-south-east, he was forced as far northward as the latitude of 48 degrees, and then his provisions growing short, he was forced to

<sup>1</sup> The sense requires the word 'for.'



make the best of his way for England, and in his passage thither, the 6th of November, in the Soundings he took another French banker; and the 10th following arrived at Spithead, having lost company with the Medway two days before.

In this expedition 51 ships were taken and destroyed. Whereof 29 were taken amounting to 3235 tons and 207 guns; and of them 16 were brought to England, 6 were sent to Lisbon, 5 sold at St. John's, 1 of 120 tons and 12 guns was left there for the security of the harbour, and the other sent to France with the prisoners. The remainder, to the number of 22, were burnt with their cargoes, as well as a great part of the cargoes of those that escaped, who were glad to get away half loaded, or anyhow to avoid the fate of the rest: besides the burning and destroying Trepassy, St. Mary's, Collonet, Great and Little St. Lawrence, and St. Peter's, all very considerable settlements of the French at Newfoundland, and of the greatest importance for carrying on their fishery in those parts, and breeding of seamen. The advantage would however have been greater by destroying and taking more of their ships, if the Commodore could have got thither sooner; but he did not receive his commission till the 24th of June; and, being obliged to convoy the trade from England to Virginia, New England, and the West Indies, he was forced to wait their time. Notwithstanding which, he left England the 22nd of July, and arrived at Newfoundland the 26th of August: so that no greater dispatch could have been used on his part; and considering these circumstances, it was extraordinary he could take and destroy so many. The news of this success in America,

added to that in Europe,<sup>1</sup> served to complete that joy the nation was in at this time upon account of our naval successes ; and Commodore Leake, upon his arrival at London, had the satisfaction to meet with a very gracious reception, both from the Queen and His Royal Highness the Lord High Admiral.

<sup>1</sup> Battle of Vigo Bay, October 12, 1702.

## CHAPTER II

*He is made Rear-Admiral and Vice-Admiral of the Blue, and Commander-in-Chief at Portsmouth; his proceedings there and in the Channel, and afterwards with the Grand Fleet till their return into harbour.*

COMMODORE LEAKE arrived at Spithead from his late successful expedition to Newfoundland the 10th of November, and the 9th of December he was appointed Rear-Admiral of the Blue Squadron of Her Majesty's Fleet, to which would have been added the honour of knighthood, but he industriously avoided it. He had no sooner received his commission than he repaired to Portsmouth, as well to hoist his flag, as to relieve Sir Stafford Fairborne, who had leave to come to London. He arrived at Portsmouth the 23rd of December, and hoisted his flag the same day on board the Stirling Castle in that harbour. The 28th he issued his orders to the Lord Dursley to hasten the equipment of his ship, and to cruise between the Land's End and the Start and the Lizard, pursuant to His Royal Highness's orders; and the 4th of January,<sup>1</sup> the like orders to Captain Allen of the Flamborough to cruise between Chichester and the Ness,<sup>2</sup> to protect the trade, and particularly to prevent the running of wool, and bringing over French silks. The Swan and Fly

<sup>1</sup> 1703.

<sup>2</sup> Dungeness.



brigantine he ordered to cruise between Folkestone and Hastings, to do the same : and having (as usual, upon being made a Flag-Officer) considered upon the choice of a ship, and a captain to command the ship at all times where he should hoist his flag, by his letter the 8th of January 1702-3, to the Lord High Admiral's secretary, he signified that he had made choice of Captain Stephen Martin, then commander of the Lowestoft, a cruising upon the Guernsey station, his brother-in-law, to be his captain,<sup>1</sup> and the Royal William, a First Rate ship, in that harbour,<sup>2</sup> to go to sea in, desiring that Captain Martin might therefore be discharged from the one, and have a commission for the other ; which was complied with the latter end of that month. This gentleman he made choice of for his Captain, not so much on account of his alliance to him, as for his qualifications, and the friendship he bore him : for Captain Martin had been bred up under him, had been several years his lieutenant, and he had been a witness of his behaviour : so that he knew him to be a brave experienced officer, though but a young Captain, and one who would always have his honour at heart : a circumstance few Admirals have been happy in, and upon which the success of every enterprise very much depends, the best concerted designs having been frequently rendered abortive by the infidelity or carelessness of those who were to carry them into execution. The change was indeed disadvantageous to Captain Martin, a cruising ship being the only means to get a fortune at sea in time of war ; but he gave up that consideration out of regard to his brother-in-law and friend ; and from this time, wholly attached himself to his fortune.

<sup>1</sup> N.R.S., vol. v, p. 67.

<sup>2</sup> Portsmouth.

The 12th of January 1702-3, Rear-Admiral Leake was appointed Commander-in-Chief of all Her Majesty's ships at Spithead and Portsmouth, to be in force for twenty days from the date. The same day he run out to Spithead. The 20th he removed his flag from the Stirling Castle to the Resolution, where he continued to give the necessary orders from time to time, as occasion required, till the 28th, when he struck his flag at Spithead, and hoisted it on board the Royal William in the harbour.

The 4th of February he received Her Majesty's Order in Council, of the 1st instant, for laying a general embargo on all shipping, for the more effectual and speedy manning the fleet. No ships that cleared outwards were to proceed till they had furnished Her Majesty's ships with one fourth of the number of men belonging to them, and those that had not cleared out were to furnish half their complements; which implied a great scarcity of seamen at that time. The 8th of February he received another commission from the Lord High Admiral, dated that day, appointing him Commander-in-Chief at Spithead and Portsmouth for twenty days, accompanied with a warrant empowering him to hold Courts Martial; and having before mentioned another commission of the like nature, it will be proper to observe, that all Commanders-in-Chief, as Admirals, Vice-Admirals, Rear-Admirals, Commodores of squadrons, and even private Commanders for particular purposes, are empowered by warrant from the Admiralty to hold Courts Martial, but with this difference; that an Admiral, or Vice-Admiral, have only a warrant, authorising them to hold such courts: whereas, if a Rear-Admiral is to be so authorised, he must have a commission,

appointing him Commander-in-Chief, as well as a warrant for so doing, because none but Commanders-in-Chief can hold Courts Martial.<sup>1</sup> But why a Rear-Admiral, being the Commanding Officer, and acting in all other respects as fully as a Vice-Admiral, should not be esteemed a Commander-in-Chief for this purpose, as well as the other, does not occur. Perhaps, the reason may be this; that a Vice-Admiral, as the name imports, is in the stead or place of the Admiral, as his deputy in his absence: whereas, a Rear-Admiral, being of an inferior rank, and no other than commander of the Reserve or Rear of the squadron, as his name implies, he cannot represent the Admiral. And as a deputy cannot have a deputy, so neither can he represent the Vice-Admiral, and therefore must first be constituted a Commander-in-Chief, because none but Commanders-in-Chief can exercise that authority. Of this kind were the two foregoing commissions, in order to enable him to enquire into the misdemeanours committed on board the ships in that harbour, and to punish the delinquents.

By virtue of this authority, the 12th, he held a Court Martial upon the Purser of the Chatham, on board the Royal William in Portsmouth harbour, and dismissed him his employ: and as he was pleased to cast some reflections upon the Court, after the sentence was read, the Admiral ordered him to be confined on board the Chatham during His Royal Highness's pleasure. The next day he hoisted his flag on board the St. George, and the following held a Court Martial upon two deserters, one of whom was sentenced to die, and the other to be whipped. The 19th he removed

<sup>1</sup> 13 Charles II, cap. 89.



his flag on board the Nassau, and the 24th held another Court Martial on board the Royal William, and dismissed the boatswain of the Dreadnought. Besides these, which were the most remarkable proceedings at the Courts Martial, there were many other smaller offenders, that merited a whipping, but not to be particularly mentioned in this place.

Soon after this there being a promotion of Flag-Officers, Rear-Admiral Leake was advanced to Vice-Admiral of the Blue squadron. By this promotion he was advanced three steps at once, for by regular gradation, he should have been first Rear-Admiral of the White, and then Rear-Admiral of the Red, before he had been made a Vice-Admiral. But this did not proceed from any partiality or favour to him, but was entirely owing to the vacancies that happened to be at that time; and was equally fortunate to Mr. Byng, who by the same means, from a private Captain, at once became Rear-Admiral of the Red.<sup>1</sup> The 4th of March he received his commission, dated the first of that month, accompanied by a warrant of the same date for holding Courts Martial.

The same day he received his commission, he hoisted the Blue Flag at the fore topmast head on board the Nassau at Spithead, upon that occasion only, presently removing it again on board the Royal William in the harbour. But two days after he shifted it from thence to the St. George. These frequent removals of the flag, from one ship to another, were occasioned by the necessity of being sometimes at Spithead, and sometimes in the harbour, and by reason of the

<sup>1</sup> Camden Society's Publications, New Series, vol. xlvi, p. 97.

refitting and docking of the ships, which obliged the Admiral to shift his flag, as often as that and other circumstances of convenience required. The 13th he detached the Monmouth to Falmouth, to convoy to the Downs the tin-ships, and the other trade from the western ports ; and having information that seven sail of small French vessels had been seen cruising between Arundel and Beachy, he ordered the Rochester to go in quest of them.

Mr. Leake, as I observed, had removed his flag from the Royal William (which he had first chosen) to the St. George, a Second Rate, intending to go to sea in her, and for that purpose, his Captain, Captain Martin, had been discharged from the first, and appointed to command the latter ; but thinking this ship still too large, if he should be suddenly ordered to sea, because of the scarcity of seamen at that time, and the larger the ship the more difficult to be manned ; he therefore, by his letter to the Admiralty of the 19th instant, desired his Captain might be removed into the Somerset, a Third Rate, in that harbour, he having chosen that ship to go to sea in. By the same occasion he represented some things in relation to the scarcity of seamen, and particularly complained of a practice by privateers and merchant ships, which he had observed since he had been in that port, which was, to offer large wages and two months' pay advance, to enter men from His Majesty's service ; so that, unless some course was taken, there would be no end of such abuses. The 26th he ordered the Suffolk and Rochester Prize to cruise between the Isle of Wight and the Berry,<sup>1</sup> in quest of some French

<sup>1</sup> Berry Head.

privateers that were hovering thereabout. The 6th of April, pursuant to the Lord High Admiral's orders, he directed the searching of all Genoese ships that were suspected of carrying effects to the French and Spaniards, and upon just cause of suspicion to bring them into port, to be further examined and proceeded against according to justice.

The 12th he received His Royal Highness's orders of the 10th instant, acquainting him that six of the enemy's ships of 60 and 70 guns each, he had advice, were at sea coming from Brest to Dunkirk, and requiring him, so soon as the Grafton, Nassau, Kent, and Essex should be ready, to proceed with them, and cruise for eight days off of La Hogue, to endeavour to intercept them ; and, to strengthen the aforesaid ships, the Suffolk, Rochester Prize, and Medway, were ordered to join him at Spithead ; but if they did not arrive before he was ready to sail, he was to leave orders for them to follow him to his station. And if any of the ships mentioned should not be manned to proceed with him, he was to take any ships of the Third Rate, that should be ready, so as he did not exceed the number by the order directed ; and he was likewise to take one or two fireships, if ready. In order to this, he shifted his flag the same day to the Grafton, a Third Rate of 70 guns, and a prime sailer, his own ship, the Somerset, not being ready upon this emergency : and he appointed Captain Cole, the senior officer, Commander of the ships at Spithead and Portsmouth, during his cruise, with the usual Instructions in such cases ; and in particular, if the Bristol man-of-war should arrive at that port from the West Indies, with Captain Kirkby and Captain Wade on board, who were



under sentence of death for treachery and cowardice,<sup>1</sup> he was to put in execution His Royal Highness's order of the 19th of March, by causing them to be shot to death immediately, without suffering them to go on shore. The same order had been sent to other ports, to be executed at the first port they should arrive; and shortly after they arrived at Plymouth, where the orders were executed.

The 15th Vice-Admiral Leake weighed, and came to Spithead with part of his squadron, where he gave out the rendez-vous which, with the wind westerly, was north-west from Cape Barfleur, five leagues; if easterly, north-east by east from the said Cape five leagues, and after the 25th instant at St. Helens. The next day at noon, being joined by the rest of the squadron, he sailed from Spithead, with six Third Rates of 70 guns, the Rochester Prize, and the Vulture and Firebrand fireships; but finding the latter to be a heavy sailer,<sup>2</sup> he ordered her back to Spithead. The following day it blew hard, and the fireship, losing her topmast, was taken in tow. The 18th they came to an anchor off the Seyne Head,<sup>3</sup> but weighed again at ten o'clock at night, plying to the westward; and early in the morning they discovered several fishing-boats, one of which, with eight men, from Burrier, the Admiral's boat took. The 20th they saw a sail to windward, which the Hampton Court and Suffolk were ordered to chase, but could not come up with. The next day they anchored off Cape de la Hogue, but soon weighed again, and kept

<sup>1</sup> For their desertion of Benbow in his gallant fight off Santa Marta, 19-24 August, 1702.

<sup>2</sup> 'Sailor,' author's spelling.

<sup>3</sup> See above, p. 57 note.

plying to windward till the 24th, when the eight days being expired, and not having seen any appearance of the enemy, he resolved to make sail for the English coast.

In his passage he was joined by the Winchester and two more with some orders from Sir George Rooke, in pursuance whereof he detached Captain Wager in the Hampton Court with five sail more to cruise on the coast of France, between Cape Barfleur and the Isle of Batz, for intercepting the trade of West France. The same day, in the afternoon, he arrived with the rest of the squadron at Spithead, where he found Sir George Rooke. He continued his flag on board the Grafton till the 1st of May, and then removed again to the Somerset. The same day he assisted at a Court Martial upon the trial of Captain Wylde, who was acquitted; and two days after, according to directions he had received from the Lord High Admiral, he issued orders for bringing into some port in England all foreign ships having naval stores, suspected to be bound to France.

The 5th in the morning, Sir George Rooke sailed from Spithead with his squadron to the westward, and in the afternoon Vice-Admiral Leake received orders, by express from the Lord High Admiral, to proceed immediately after him with some packets. Accordingly he endeavoured to weigh directly, but there was so little wind he could hardly get out of St. Helens. Early next morning for greater expedition he shifted his flag on board the Northumberland, and went privately to join Admiral Rooke, sending the Somerset back to Spithead. He weighed and plied out immediately, but with very little wind at south. And the 8th at night joined the fleet, hoisting his flag on board the Prince George, a Second Rate,

which ship he continued in for several years after, though she was an indifferent man-of-war, and carried her guns ill ; and I do not apprehend why he continued so long in her, unless it was for her name's sake.

On the 9th of May, about fifteen leagues from Ushant, a council of war was called of Flag Officers, who, perusing the Instructions from Her Majesty and the intelligence received from Brest of the enemy's preparations, together with a project for a descent in the Bay of Vernon at the mouth of the River Bordeaux, it was determined to send some frigates through the Race<sup>1</sup> to gain further intelligence from Brest, and to proceed with the gross of the fleet to Belle Isle (it being judged unsafe to go farther so early in the year) and that from thence some frigate should be detached as far as St. Martin,<sup>2</sup> to discover what the enemy were doing in those parts. Accordingly a detachment was made the next day for that service who, steering along shore, passed within a mile of Conquet Road, where there was not any ship to be seen, only some small craft, but observed the coast was fortified with near thirty guns between Conquet and St. Matthew's Point.<sup>3</sup> They stood into the Sound without Brest, and to the eastward of Camaret, but saw not anything there, nor could they discover in the harbour more than six sail ready for the sea, three of them from 60 to 70 guns, and the other from 30 to 40. A fisherman that was taken, affirmed that there sailed from Brest the Sunday before four ships of three decks, under the command of Monsieur

<sup>1</sup> Passage du Four.

<sup>2</sup> I. de Rhé.

<sup>3</sup> For chart of approaches to Brest, see N.R.S., vol. xiv, opposite p. 32.



Cotlogon ;<sup>1</sup> that there were between 20 and 30 more in the harbour disarmed ; and in the Road four ships of war and two privateers, ready to sail. Upon this a council of war was held of Flag Officers and Captains, the 12th of May, to consider of the Queen's Instructions, and the intelligence they had ; and they concluded to sail as far as Belle Isle, and that a detachment should be sent to St. Martin, or elsewhere, for further advice, Belle Isle being appointed the rendez-vous from the 16th to the 20th of May, and afterwards in the latitude of 46 and 47 degrees, S.S.W. from Ushant.

The 15th, the Medway took a prize. Two days after, the Winchester, Dover and Lichfield joined the fleet, which was prevented getting into the Bay by southerly winds, fogs, and calms. Nevertheless, the 19th they got as far in as the Seames,<sup>2</sup> but the wind flying out fresh at S.S.W. and S.W. obliged them to stand out again. The next day the wind coming northerly, the Admiral stood into the Bay with the fleet, and a Dutch galliot informed them that they saw the Tuesday before 26 French men-of-war standing westward, the land about Bordeaux then bearing E. by S. near 15 leagues off. Upon this, at a council of war the 23rd, it was judged convenient to proceed to Belle Isle, according to the resolution of the 12th, and that the detachment designed for St. Martin should not be sent thither, until it could be certainly known whether the enemy's ships were in those parts, or gone to sea.

The 24th the fleet arrived at Belle Isle, where there was not anything to be seen but some

<sup>1</sup> 'Cotlongon,' Burchett ; Troude spells it Coëtlogon.

<sup>2</sup> (?) I. de Seins.

fishing-boats. Upon their going in, a detachment was made to the south-east end of the island to intercept any vessels that might attempt coming out that way, and another detachment to the Isle of Groix (or Grouais) lying off Port Louis,<sup>1</sup> to surprise any shipping which should be found riding off that port. Which last detachment brought into the fleet two small barks (taken from amongst twenty) that were bound southward from Brest. But the remainder (except some which were stranded) with their convoy of 14 guns, got into Port Louis. Hereupon, and upon what the prisoners related, a council of war of Flags and Captains was held in Belle Isle Road the 27th of May, and they resolved, it was not advisable to divide the fleet ; and also resolved to put in execution the orders which the Admiral had received, by repairing to the station S.S.W. from Ushant, in the latitude of 46 and 47 degrees, the better to meet with any of the enemy's ships, bound in or out of the Bay. The 27th the Dragon took a privateer of 16 guns ; at the same time a sail with French colours coming into the fleet, a signal was made for the boats to chase, and she stood in for the island, and run on shore.

From the time the fleet came to an anchor in Belle Isle Road, until the 1st of June, it blew very hard ; but two days after, the fleet sailed and stood towards the appointed station. The 4th, the Lichfield brought in a French prize from Martinique ; and the next day the Lyme joined the fleet with another prize ; and the 19th of June, the Medway brought in another prize. And it having been resolved to stay no longer than the 10th of June on that station, they shaped

<sup>1</sup> Lorient.

their course homewards accordingly, and the fleet arrived at St. Helens, after a tedious passage, the 21st of the aforesaid month. Two days after, they came to Spithead, and soon after Sir George Rooke left the fleet, having, by his order of the 26th of June, put the ships at Spithead and Portsmouth harbour under the command of Vice-Admiral Leake.



### CHAPTER III

*The campaign of 1703 continued. He goes with a reinforcement to Lisbon. Proceedings of the Fleet in the Mediterranean. Their return to England. The great storm, and Mr. Leake's wonderful preservation therein, &c.*

THE King of Portugal at length having acceded to the Grand Alliance, a treaty between the Emperor, the Queen of Great Britain, the King of Portugal, and the States General, was signed at Lisbon, and being brought to London on the 24th of May, the ratification of it passed the Great Seal of Great Britain the 14th of July following. Sir Clowdisley Shovell was thereupon ordered with a fleet to the Mediterranean in great haste, as well to hinder the enemy's fleet from passing the Straits, as to prevent any attempts they might make to insult the Portuguese, for deserting their engagements with the crown of France.<sup>1</sup>

Sir Clowdisley sailed from Spithead the 1st of July; but as several of the ships appointed for that expedition could not be got ready time enough to proceed with him, he desired that the strictest orders might be given for their proceeding after him to the Rock of Lisbon, so that the service might not be delayed by his staying there in

<sup>1</sup> Shovell's Instructions are printed in full by Burchett, pp. 646-9.

expectation of them. This Sir Clowdisley particularly recommended to the care of Vice-Admiral Leake, well knowing his zeal and diligence for the public service ; and soon after he received orders from the Lord High Admiral to the same effect. Accordingly he used his best endeavours to forward those ships for the service they were intended, being eight sail, viz. two Second, and six Third Rates. But he found this service much more difficult than was expected ; for upon examination, those eight ships had above a thousand men sick on shore, besides a considerable number on board that could not be received into sick quarters for want of room ; so that it was impossible they should be ready in a short time, if he was to wait for their recovery. This he represented to the Lord High Admiral, with the necessity therefore there was of turning men over from other ships upon this emergency, a practice he was otherwise much averse to. And His Highness having signified his consent, he ordered men to be turned from other ships, so as with their marines to make up the complements of five of the eight, in order to leave the other three to follow after him as soon as possible, judging it to be more for the service to proceed with five ships than to stay till the whole eight were completed, which would take up a considerable time to do, there being such a scarcity of seamen.

The 9th he gave out the rendez-vous to the ships, which was off the Rock of Lisbon, or at Cascaes ; but if they did not find the fleet there, then to enquire of Her Majesty's Envoy at Lisbon, or the Agent at Cascaes, for further directions. And having now by his unwearied application, got the ships in a readiness to proceed, on the 10th instant he sailed from St. Helens with the

Prince George and Association, Second Rates, and the Shrewsbury, Russell, and Lancaster, Third Rates; and used such dispatch, that in eleven days he joined the Grand Fleet at sea in their passage to Lisbon; and two days after, the whole fleet arrived at Cascaes, the entrance into Lisbon River. The same evening the King of Portugal was acquainted by Sir Stafford Fairborne of their arrival, whereat the Portuguese much rejoiced, being now out of fear of being insulted by the French fleet, which was reported to be designed against them. Two days after, the King of Portugal took a view of the fleet, and was wonderfully pleased at the sight of it, consisting, in the whole, of above 69 ships, English and Dutch, of which 47 were of the Line.

The 25th a Council of War was held, consisting of Sir Clowdisley Shovell, Vice-Admiral Leake, Vice-Admiral Byng, and three Dutch Admirals, viz. Allemonde, Vandergoes, and Wassenaer; and it was resolved to remain at Cascaes till the 29th, to take in water, and then to proceed into the Straits, the place of rendez-vous being Altea Bay, but in case of a hard easterly wind, that of Almeria <sup>1</sup> in Granada.

The 31st of July the fleet sailed from Cascaes with the trade, and came off Cape Spartel <sup>2</sup> the 4th of August, where they met with a fresh Levant <sup>3</sup> wind. Here they were joined by Captain Norris, who had been detached with four ships, to look into Cadiz. He brought an account that there were twelve French galleys in Cadiz, but none of their men-of-war on the Spanish coast. And they had also intelligence by Sir

<sup>1</sup> Lat. 36.45 N.; Long. 2.30 W.

<sup>2</sup> Lat. 35.50 N.; Long. 6.0 W.

<sup>3</sup> Easterly.



Thomas Hardy, who had likewise been detached with four sail to Lagos for intelligence, that 22 great ships had passed by Faro from West France into the Straits, and that the Consul there was informed they had above 40 ships of war at Toulon. The 9th of August they were obliged to anchor between the Cape and Tangier, the tide driving them upon the shore, and not wind enough to work their ships. But soon after they towed, and warped off the shore, and at noon anchored in Tangier road, where they freely bought fresh provisions. They sailed the 12th, and with a westerly wind got through the Straits that night. But the Levant blowing afterwards pretty fresh, they made but little way, and the fleet, wanting water, stretched from Cape de Gata<sup>1</sup> to Cape Hony<sup>2</sup> in Barbary, to get some water there. Upon their arrival, a boat was sent with a flag of truce, to acquaint the Moors with their design; but these barbarians answered their civility with musket-shot, not suffering them to land, killed one of the boat's crew, and mortally wounded the Lieutenant who commanded the boat, of which he died two days afterwards.

The want of water increasing daily, and abundance of men dying through excessive heat, which the calms they had from time to time rendered more intolerable, a council of war was held the 29th of August on board the *Triumph*. At this council, Her Majesty's Instructions of the 4th of May 1703 to Sir Clowdisley Shovell being read, and the first part of them being considered relating to the fleet's going into the

<sup>1</sup> Lat. 36.40 N.; Long. 2.10 W.

<sup>2</sup> The eighteenth-century maps give Cape Hona midway between Cape Figalo and Rachgoun Island, on the meridian of Cape de Gata.

Bay of Narbonne to assist the Cevennois,<sup>1</sup> it was resolved, with regard to the shoalness of that coast, and the danger of navigating a fleet in that bay, and the season of the year so far spent with respect to the time when the fleet was to return home, that it was neither safe nor practicable for a fleet or squadron to go into that bay. But it was resolved to send two ships thither, with some arms and ammunition, to attempt the putting them on shore in the hands of the Cevennois : and in consideration that the whole fleet was to return home some time in September, it was resolved, the fleet should go into Altea Bay and water ; but if it should blow hard southerly, or westerly, or any other accident happen to hinder them watering there, then to proceed to Cagliari on the island of Sardinia, and there water ; which was the place of their next rendez-vous ; but if they watered at Altea, then Leghorn was the rendez-vous.

In pursuance of this resolution, they made use of the little wind they had to get into Altea Bay, sending the *Eagle* and *Hampton Court* before ; but the Governor fired upon them with two guns he had planted on a tower, which were soon silenced and dismounted. The 30th, about two in the afternoon, the whole fleet came in sight of the place, and the *Flamborough* was sent close into the shore to cover the descent of the

<sup>1</sup> The Protestants of Languedoc, the last remnants of the Huguenot party, had long groaned under most cruel persecution. The exercise of their religion was denied them ; and, if they presumed to meet for worship, they were pitilessly pursued and mercilessly hunted down. Roused to vengeance, they gathered in bands among the hills ; and, as they grew in strength, they increased also in daring. They bore the names of ' Camisards ' and gave the government of Louis XIV much anxiety in the year 1703.

Marines, who, to the number of 2500, landed without confusion or opposition, and presently formed a camp. A message was sent to the Governor, that they did not come as enemies, but friends ; to which he returned answer that he had a great esteem for the English ; however, he was sorry it was not in his power to oppose them. At the same time a manifesto was published, which had a good effect, so that the Spaniards brought plenty of refreshments, for which they were paid ready money. They professed a great hatred to the French, and drank prosperity to the Archduke.

The ships being provided with water and provisions, the marines returned on board the 3rd of September in the afternoon, and the same evening the whole fleet sailed for Leghorn. Two days afterwards there was a meeting of the Flag Officers, both English and Dutch, when Admiral Allemonde declared, he was obliged by his instructions to be in Holland by the 20th of November ; and, as his ships were victualled for no longer, it was time for him to look homewards. Upon this a consultation of English Flags was held the 17th of September, by whom it was agreed (in regard of Admiral Allemonde's Instructions which inclined him to separate to return home) that in order to prevent the misfortune of a separation, if they could not reach Leghorn by the last of September, a convoy should be sent thither with the trade, and the whole fleet return to England. The same day they had a sudden storm of wind that held above three quarters of an hour, with thunder, lightning, and rain, that split their sails before they could hand them. However, it soon after proved good weather and the wind coming westerly, they arrived at Leghorn Road the 19th at night.



The next day in the afternoon, the town fired five guns, and soon after the Governor sent to welcome the Admirals, and to acquaint them the five guns were intended as a salute to the Queen of England's flag. But a consultation of Flag Officers being had thereupon, they resolved it was not a proper salute, and that the Admiral could not receive any compliments till that was done. To this it was replied that they gave no more guns to Sir John Narbrough, the Duke of Grafton, and Admiral Aylmer, who all wore the same flag. But they were told the case was now different. That flag was now accompanied with several other flags, both English and Dutch, whereas theirs was single. Several couriers passed upon this occasion to the Grand Duke at Florence, and gave great uneasiness. But the Admirals being resolved to maintain Her Majesty's honour in this point, after three days Pro and Con, it was agreed the Citadel should fire eleven guns, if the Admiral would return the like, which he assuring them should be done, the salute was presently made, and answered soon after. And the Admiral received the extraordinary presents of refreshments, which had been prepared for the French fleet, commanded by Count Toulouse, who had been expected there before them, but durst not stir out of the harbour of Toulon, so long as the confederate fleet remained in the Mediterranean.

The 23rd of September, a council of war was held, and it was resolved to sail, if possible, the 26th, to return home, but if a westerly wind should hinder them getting out of the Straits, then Cape Malaga was the place of rendez-vous, if they could reach it; but if not, then Altea Bay; and when the fleet was without the Straits, then the place of rendez-vous was ten leagues

to the westward of Cape St. Vincent, there to remain forty-eight hours, in order to meet again, and no longer.

Whilst the fleet lay at Leghorn, they had very stormy weather, and the 27th it blew so hard, that the Dorsetshire drove directly in the hawse of the Prince George, and four others parted their cables and drove, receiving considerable damage. The day after this the Count de Lamberg, Ambassador from His Imperial Majesty at Rome, came on board the fleet, bringing the news that the Archduke was proclaimed King of Spain, upon which all the Flag Officers fired twenty-one guns, and every other ship fifteen.

The wind continuing westerly and southerly, with hard gales, kept the fleet at Leghorn till the 2nd of October, when a Levant springing up, they sailed, but sailing soon after, they met with great difficulty in getting to the westward of Corsica, which they did not reach before the 10th of October. On the 12th, between nine and ten at night, arose a sudden and violent storm of wind, with lightning, rain, and prodigious claps of thunder, which did considerable damage to the ships, in their masts, sails and rigging, and obliged them to lay by all night. In this time, a storeship having lost her mainmast in the storm, coming close to the leeward of the Prince George, Vice-Admiral Leake's ship, he took her in tow, and two days after fitted a mast for her, with yards, sails, and rigging, and stopping her leaks, ordered one of his division to keep her company, by which means she was saved. Otherwise she had been lost.

The 22nd they were off of Altea, and landed three or four hundred marines to protect their

watering. After this, steering homewards, the 15th of November they made the land, upon which Sir Clowdisley Shovell struck the Union Flag, and hoisted his proper flag, as Admiral of the White. And the next day the fleet arrived off the Isle of Wight, the Dutch crowding directly for their own ports; and the day after the English fleet anchored in the Downs; the ships in a good condition, but the ships' companies in a very bad one. For upwards of 1500 had died in the voyage, and three quarters of the rest were so ill and weak, that there were scarce sufficient to manage the ships. And to complete their misfortunes, a few days after, the most violent storm came upon them that ever was known in England, and therefore ever since, by way of eminence, called 'The Great Storm,' which being so well known, it will be sufficient to give an account only of Vice-Admiral Leake's wonderful preservation in this dismal catastrophe.<sup>1</sup>

It was one of the long and dark nights of

<sup>1</sup> For the 'Great Storm' see Earl Stanhope's *History of England during the Reign of Queen Anne*, pp. 102-8. All who have written on the theme confess their indebtedness to Daniel Defoe's *A Collection of the most remarkable Casualties and Disasters which happened in the late Dreadful Tempest, both by sea and land*, a most minute and circumstantial record, containing many letters from 'eye-witnesses.' These letters may be genuine and authentic, but it is arguable that the author of *A Journal of the Plague Year* may very well have invented them, together with the picturesque and convincing details they contain. See also the famous lines in Addison's *Campaign* and Macaulay's comments in his *Essay on Addison*. The Navy lost four Third Rates, Northumberland, Restoration, Stirling Castle and Resolution; five Fourth Rates, Mary, Newcastle, Reserve, York, and Vigo; together with one Mortar vessel and the Eagle Advice boat; cp. N.R.S. vol. v, pp. 72-3. Lediard gives a detailed schedule of ships and lives lost, *Naval History*, vol. ii, p. 779.



November, between the 26th and 27th, that brought forth this dreadful storm. The violence of it began about one o'clock, the wind blowing from the W.S.W. to the S.S.W. and in a short time spread destruction over the face of the whole kingdom. But as it seems to have been engendered in the Downs, so it spent its utmost fury there. That place, which the evening before appeared like a goodly forest, in two hours was reduced to a desert, hardly an object being left to cheer the sight, had the darkness of the night permitted; Vice-Admiral Leake, in the *Prince George*, alone riding fast in despite of the two contending elements, but with the expectation only of being the last to be swallowed up. About three o'clock, believing the storm to be at the worst, they were encouraged to hope they might ride it out, but just then, they discovered the *Restoration*, a Third Rate Ship driving upon them, and presently came so near, they were forced to brace their yards to prevent her driving on board them. However they hoped she might go clear of them; but whilst they flattered themselves with this hope, her anchor came up to the hawse of the *Prince George*, and she stopped, riding fast by them. Now their fate seemed inevitable, for if no ship but theirs had been able to ride out the storm single, how was it possible their ground-tackle should hold two great ships? There was no means left, but to cut her away. They endeavoured it, but they could not do it. There was now no hopes; they waited their approaching Fate, which every minute threatened their destruction. By the prodigious strain, their best bower was soon brought home, and their small bower brought a-head, and in this manner they rode for half an hour, the longest

half-hour that ever they knew, for every minute seemed to be the last. But when all human aids failed, and all expectations were vain, the invisible hand of Providence relieved them ; for whether the cable of the Restoration parted, or the anchor slipped, they knew not, but she drove away, and soon after was lost, with every living creature on board ; by which means, Vice-Admiral Leake happily survived the general devastation. This wonderful deliverance, under Providence, was owing to a prudent foresight, in the Admiral and his Captain, Captain Martin, by providing against the worst, the day before, when it blew very hard ; when considering the time of year, the place they were in, and what might happen, they made a snug ship, veering out their long service<sup>1</sup> to two cables and two thirds, and doing everything that might enable them to ride out a hard storm ; by which precaution, they not only saved themselves, but the lives of 700 men under their care, with Her Majesty's ship ; and all this, without cutting away a mast, or using any extraordinary means, or receiving any damage more than usual in a hard gale of wind ; which was a happiness and an honour no other could pretend to.

When it was day, they saw twelve sail ashore upon the Goodwin, Bunt Head, and Brake Sands, amongst whom was Admiral Beaumont in the Mary, the Stirling Castle, Northumberland, and Restoration, who were all to pieces by ten o'clock, and all the men perished, except one from the Mary, and about eighty from the Stirling Castle. It was a melancholy prospect, to see between two to three thousand perish in this manner, without a

<sup>1</sup> Special precautions in the way of leather and hempen bindings to prevent the cable from being galled or worn through by friction in the hawse.

possibility of helping them. The Nassau cut away her masts, the Garland and Dunwich lost all their masts, the Lichfield her foremast, the Postillion her mainmast, and several merchant ships theirs ; the rest drove out of the Downs, or foundered at an anchor.

Next day, as soon as the storm was something abated, Vice-Admiral Leake ordered the Anne, and all the boats of the ships that were left, to the Stirling Castle's wreck, to endeavour to save the men upon the poop, which was the only part left, and save the Lieutenant, Chaplain, Cook and seventy men almost dead with cold, together with the coxswain of the yawl of the Mary, who swam from the wreck of his own ship to the other, and reported that Admiral Beaumont, his Lieutenant and Clerk, lashed themselves to a piece of the ship which no doubt drove to sea.

Of these unhappy circumstances of the fleet, lately in the Downs, Vice-Admiral Leake acquainted the Lord High Admiral, by his letter to His Highness of the 28th instant, and also of the immediate necessity those few that remained were under of all sorts of stores, but especially of anchors, cables, cordage, and jury-masts ; and that his own sheet anchor was all he had now to depend upon, his best and small bower being damaged by the Restoration's anchor.

Having now given all possible assistance to those in distress, and taken a proper care of those that remained, his next concern was for those that had been driven out of the Downs. For this purpose, the 1st of December, he ordered the Assistance, Chatham, and Mary Galley, to cruise to and fro for three or four days, about the North Sand Head and on the back of the South Sand to look out for such merchant ships as might be



in those parts, and in want of help, and to assist and bring them into port. And having performed this service, the 5th instant, he ordered the two former ships to proceed to the North Sea, and look out between England and Holland, and sailing along the east coast of the Galloper, and so over near the coast of Holland, to look for Her Majesty's ships the Association, Dorsetshire, Revenge, and Russell, which were drove from their anchors at the Gunfleet in the late storm, and had not been heard of since. Having now completed what was necessary to be done by him, upon this occasion, and received His Royal Highness's leave to go to London, he struck his flag the 10th of December, and went thither, having appointed Captain Martin to proceed with the Prince George to Spithead, the first opportunity.

This was the end of the campaign of 1703, a very fatal one to our men and to our shipping; and though there had been no fighting, yet as dangerous and fatiguing as any that happened during the war. As to the sickness of the fleet, Bishop Burnet intimates, as if it had been much owing to the unwholesomeness of the provisions; and, if so, justly blames the Commissioners of the Victualling for it; and, I think, there may be some truth in it, because the sickness was amongst our men at Portsmouth, before they left England. They carried it with them to sea, and the greater part died in a few weeks after they left England; for of sixty that died in the Prince George, above one half was in the passage to Lisbon, and soon afterwards the ships' companies grew more healthy. As to the losses sustained in our shipping, it was our misfortune, but not our fault. But if nothing was done in this expedition to the Mediterranean, it was the fault of

those that sent the fleet thither so late in the year, when the Admirals had represented that nothing could be expected from the voyage. Sir Clowdisley Shovell did not leave England till the 8th of July,<sup>1</sup> and his orders were to return in September ; so that (as the Bishop observes) everything was so ill laid, as if it had been intended nothing should be done.

During the short recess between this and the ensuing campaign, Mr. Leake was not wholly disengaged from naval affairs ; for by the Lord High Admiral's order, he was appointed, with some other Flag Officers, to have a consultation upon the great scarcity of seamen that had hitherto been during the war, and which had very much obstructed all our designs by sea ; and to consider of means to remedy this inconvenience. Accordingly they met together the last of December, and having maturely considered the matter, they made their report thereupon to His Royal Highness, who so well approved of it, that the means proposed were afterwards carried into execution, and contributed very much to the public service. His Highness so well approved what had been done, that soon after he appointed the same Flag Officers, at a council of war, to consider how the marines might be made more useful, there being frequent disputes and misunderstandings between the marines and sea-officers. Accordingly a council of war was held the 17th of January, on board the *Triumph*, and the resolutions of the said council of war were afterwards established, as Rules to be observed on board Her Majesty's ships of war. Immediately after this, Vice-

<sup>1</sup> He left Spithead on 1st of July, but was held up in Soundings by contrary winds.]

Admiral Leake received His Highness's orders to proceed to Portsmouth, and take upon him the command of the ships in that harbour, at Spithead, and St. Helens, causing all possible dispatch to be made in doing what might be necessary towards putting the ships there in a condition for the sea. In pursuance of which orders, he hoisted his flag on board the Prince George in that harbour the 20th of January, at which place we shall leave him till the opening of the next campaign.



## CHAPTER IV

*The Campaign of 1704. Vice-Admiral Leake is knighted. Convoys the transports to Lisbon. Is left with a squadron at that place. Joins the Grand Fleet. They attempt Barcelona, pursue the French Fleet, and take Gibraltar.*

ONE of the motives upon which the King of Portugal entered into the Grand Alliance<sup>1</sup> was that the Archduke Charles of Austria should be declared King of Spain, and come in person into Portugal. For this end he embarked from Holland under the convoy of a squadron commanded by Sir George Rooke, who was appointed to command the fleet that was to proceed with His Majesty and the forces to Portugal. The 26th of December they arrived at Spithead; and, the King of Spain having made his compliments in person to Her Majesty at Windsor, returned to Portsmouth the 1st of January. Four days after, Sir George Rooke sailed with the fleet, but was forced back again the 20th. That same day Vice-Admiral Leake arrived at Portsmouth, and hoisted his flag on board the Prince George, to take upon him the command of the ships at that place, Spithead, and St. Helens; and to cause all possible dispatch to be made towards putting the ships there in a condition for the sea, pursuant to His Royal Highness's orders.

<sup>1</sup> Sc. One of the stipulations made by the King of Portugal when he entered the Grand Alliance, &c.

The 1st of February Admiral Rooke having received some further orders in relation to the transportation of the forces to Portugal, and to hasten his proceeding thither, he called a council of war of Flag Officers, which consisted only of Vice-Admiral Leake of the English, and two Dutch Admirals ; and they determined that, since all the transports might be ready whenever the wind should permit them to sail, it was necessary to proceed with as many ships of war for their security as could possibly be spared from other services ; and that, since there would be left behind no other transports than those which were in Holland, it was judged that eight men-of-war, and such other ships of the English quota for service on the coast of Portugal as could be timely put into a condition, would be sufficient convoy for them. They also represented it to be absolutely necessary that all possible diligence should be used in sending to Lisbon the remainder of the 38 ships, which were to join the 19 Dutch, then at, and<sup>1</sup> going to, Portugal ; for there was reason to apprehend the enemy would get a strong squadron together early in the spring, and endeavour to block our ships up in the Tagus, whereby they would have it in their power to intercept all such as should be bound from England, and disappoint the whole summer's service ; whereas, if the fleet rendez-voused early at Lisbon, it was judged they might be able to prevent the enemy's joining their fleets of the Mediterranean and Ocean, and perform other services on the coast of Spain.

Pursuant to these resolutions, the 5th following Sir George Rooke sailed with the King of Spain and the fleet and transports, leaving Vice-Admiral

<sup>1</sup> Or.

Leake with Instructions (according to the result of the council of war) that as soon as the Dutch transports with forces should arrive from Holland, he was with them and<sup>1</sup> the ships that should be then ready in that harbour for their convoy, to take them under his command, and proceed after Sir George Rooke to the River of Lisbon. Accordingly Vice-Admiral Leake having given the proper directions for hastening the ships of war against the Dutch transports should arrive, on the 8th he set out for London in order to receive His Royal Highness's sentiments and last Instructions in relation to the expedition, and met with a favourable reception. His Highness was also pleased to present him to Her Majesty, who upon that occasion conferred on him the honour of knighthood, an honour he had hitherto avoided, but could not at this time with decency refuse.

With this additional honour he returned to his command the 19th of February, and was immediately followed by orders from His Royal Highness (which he received the next day) that whereas Her Majesty had signified her pleasure that all possible diligence should be used in the getting to Lisbon the transports with troops bound thither, lately arrived at Spithead from Holland, and that he should go along with them; he was directed, if he could get the three Dutch men-of-war then at Spithead to sail with him, with the Newark, Tiger, and Garland and the transports (as soon as they were ready), with the first opportunity of wind and weather to proceed to Lisbon, taking with him, as far as their way should lie together, the Nonsuch, Deal Castle, and Mermaid, which were bound to Jamaica; in case

<sup>1</sup> For 'with them and' read 'together with.'



they were ready to sail with him, otherwise not to stay for them. But if he could not get the three Dutch men-of-war to go with him, he was then (as soon as the Newark, Tiger and Garland, and the ships bound to Jamaica should be ready) to proceed with the transports without the Dutch. And whereas the Burlington was designed on a voyage to the Cape, which ship it was intended should sail with him, if the orders from the East India Company about their ships could be timely dispatched, he was therefore to hasten her to Spithead and man her to her middle complement out of the Humber and Cornwall. And by another order he was directed, in case the Garland was not arrived at Spithead before he was ready to sail, to proceed without her, taking the Burlington with him, as far as their way should lie together; and to deliver to her commander an order enclosed, directed for him (before he sailed), together with the sealed Instructions from the East India Company which accompanied it. With these orders he likewise received a letter from Mr. Clarke, His Royal Highness's secretary, acquainting him how impatient the Queen was that the King of Spain might have the rest of the forces with him; that Her Majesty had been informed that no convoy could be got ready to go within twelve or fourteen days, and therefore in Cabinet Council was pleased to give directions for his sailing as soon as possible; that he was to use all arguments to persuade the Dutch to go with him, for if their ships should come from the Texel with the seventeen companies of foot, they might be convoyed by the ships that were to follow him to Lisbon; and there was no likelihood of their arrival at Spithead before that convoy would be ready to sail.

It was the 19th at night when Sir John Leake arrived at Portsmouth, and early the next morning he received the packet with the aforesaid orders, which being so pressing for him to be gone, he immediately struck his flag on board the *Prince George*, which was not yet ready for the sea (having suffered very much in the late storm) and leaving her to follow him, he hoisted it on board the *Newark*, a Third Rate of 80 guns, at Spithead; presently unmoored, and gave out the proper orders to the ships there that were to proceed with him; and, having sent for the Commodore of the Dutch and used some arguments with him, at length prevailed upon him to sail with him. Only at his request, in order to justify his proceedings to Admiral Callenburgh, Sir John gave him [ ] <sup>1</sup> from under his hand that it was His Royal Highness's desire he should do so.

This point being settled, Sir John immediately dispatched an account thereof to the Lord High Admiral, and to acquaint <sup>2</sup> him that he was using his utmost diligence to put his orders in execution, and hoped to sail from St. Helens the next day. For this purpose he sailed that afternoon from Spithead to St. Helens, with the *Newark*, *Tiger*, *Garland* and three sail of Dutch men-of-war, together with the transports, having on board the remainder of the troops for the King of Spain, and some storeships. And the next day being the 21st, early in the morning, they sailed from St. Helens in order to proceed without the Dutch transports expected from Holland. But at noon, seeing some ships in the offing, Sir John thought proper to lie by, to know what they were, and they proved to be the Dutch transports from the

<sup>1</sup> Supply 'a certificate.'

<sup>2</sup> *Sc.* Acquainted.

Texel. Having thus luckily joined them, he proceeded on his voyage. The following morning, being near Plymouth, he dispatched a frigate to get the merchant ships out of that port, to go under his convoy. They joined him in the afternoon, as did the *Mermaid*, *Newcastle*, and *Garland*.<sup>1</sup> The 1st of March being got the length of the *Burlings*,<sup>2</sup> he dispatched the *Burlington*, *Mermaid*, *Nonsuch* and *Deal Castle*, with their convoy; and the day following he arrived with the Dutch and English auxiliaries before Lisbon, not one ship having met with any accident. Soon after his arrival, he was presented to the King of Portugal and was graciously received.

The 5th of March a council of war was called, at which were present, besides the Admiral, Sir John Leake, and Rear-Admiral Dilkes and Wishart, and of the Dutch, Admiral Callenburgh, and Vice-Admiral Wassenaer. At this council they read several advices of the preparations of the enemy, and adhered to what had been determined at the former council of war of the 29th of the last month (which was to detach 16 or 18 sail to cruise between Cape St Vincent, Cape Spartel, Cape St. Mary,<sup>3</sup> and for thirty days, unless it was necessary for them to return sooner). For they were of opinion that a squadron of ships, appearing in that sea, would give great countenance and protection to our commerce; and that several of our ships, being clean, might probably intercept small squadrons of French ships so early in the year. And it was hoped at their return, they might be enabled, by the arrival of ships from England, to form a

<sup>1</sup> (?) *Mermaid*, *Deal Castle*, and *Nonsuch*.

<sup>2</sup> The *Berlinga Islands*.

<sup>3</sup> Lat. 37.12 N., Long. 7.25 W. (eastern extremity of Portugal).



squadron of sufficient strength to meet and oppose the enemy's fleets.

According to this resolution, the Admiral sailed the 7th with the gross of the fleet ; leaving Sir John Leake with the remainder at Lisbon, consisting of six sail, two fireships, and one hospital, and these Instructions, viz. he was to cause the Content Hulk (lately arrived with him from England laden with stores) to be pulled down, and made useful, and to cause the stores to be removed on shore. As soon as the Woolwich arrived, he was to order her to convoy the Newfoundland ships thither, and to remain there to protect the fishing, till the Coventry and Kinsale arrived from England to relieve him. He was to send two sail home with the trade and transport-ships ; and in case any clean ships should arrive from England before the 20th instant, he was to order them to join the Admiral in the station between Cape St. Vincent, Cape Spartel, and Cape St. Mary.

The 13th of March, Sir John executed that part of his orders relating to the trade and transports by appointing a convoy to see them safe to England, in expectation that they might soon be ready to sail. But from the time the Admiral sailed to the 25th it proved such extreme bad weather that the transports were not able to put out their stores and provisions. Particularly the 23rd they had such a violent storm, that put many of the ships in great danger ; and a Dutch man-of-war, driving athwart Admiral Leake's hawse, forced them from their anchors, breaking their small bower cable, and the best bower of one of the hulks. As soon as the weather was something better, Sir John gave orders for unlading the transports, in order for their return to

England ; and likewise for careening the ships of war. But he was very much surprised to find there was neither a house appointed to receive the stores nor a hulk to careen the ships ; though there had been a person some time before appointed by the Admiral to solicit that affair. This was a great disappointment to the service ; and, being ignorant of the true cause, he immediately applied himself to the English Ambassador (Mr. Methuen) to know the meaning of it. His Excellency presently answered his letter with some surprise ; that, so far from knowing the reason of this delay, he had not heard one word from the gentleman employed in it, that he wanted either ; which if he had, would not have been now to struggle for ; but that he thought there had not been that care taken that ought to have been, in a matter of that importance to Her Majesty's service. ' I cannot but admire,' says he, ' that I never could hear (either from the officers of the Admiralty, or Navy <sup>1</sup>) of their desires, or of their intentions ; to the end that I might have provided and secured places proper for the stores and other services, which might have been in all respects better done when there was not that vast occasion of store-houses as there is now.'

His Excellency, however, undertook the affair, and procured an order from the King of Portugal to one of his principal ministers, to be supplied both with the one and the other. But so far from this being complied with, eight days afterwards Sir John acquainted the Ambassador that, notwithstanding the trouble he had given himself in this affair, the hulk, which he expected, had, on the contrary, been employed in the service of

<sup>1</sup> Navy Board.

the Dutch ; so that he must wait till they had done with her, there being but two, and both attending that service ; that they could not possibly make use of their own, for want of a store-house to put out her loading ; which store-house, he thought, might certainly have been obtained, if proper application had been made by Mr. Cheney, who had been appointed for that purpose.

Affairs being thus at a stand, and no assistance to be expected from the Portuguese, Sir John wrote to Sir George Rooke (March 21), acquainting him with the endeavours he had used to comply with the orders he left him. 'Everything,' says he, 'at Lisbon is almost in the same posture you left them in, the extreme bad weather having been a great hindrance ; the transport-ships not clear of their provisions, nor the *Tiger* careened for want of a hulk, or the stores ashore for want of a store-house ; though there had not wanted my application to the Ambassador for one and to forward the other services ; but to little purpose. Nor can any greater dispatch be expected whilst we have any dependence upon the Portuguese ; for notwithstanding the King's order eight days ago to provide a store-house and accommodate us with a hulk and everything else we might want out of their own stores, yet there is nothing complied with.' This is one instance how ill we were treated by the Portuguese, and how much better the Dutch affairs were conducted at that Court than the English.

But notwithstanding these difficulties, that the reparation of the ships might be carried on in the best manner the present circumstances would admit, several of the squadron were made to supply the place of hulks upon this occasion ;



so that the business was dispatched much sooner than could have been expected under the want of all necessaries. The 25th Rear-Admiral Dilkes arrived in the Kent with the Bedford and Suffolk, and two days after a Dutch Rear-Admiral with three sail, and a letter from the Admiral to Sir John Leake, acquainting him that he intended to be at Lisbon the latter end of the month ; and on the 6th of April he came to Lisbon accordingly.

Sir George Rooke being arrived at Lisbon, a council of war was called the 12th of April to consider of Her Majesty's orders of the 1st of January, relating to the security of the Turkey Fleet. And upon intelligence of seven French ships of war seen near Alicante, and for relieving of Nice or Villefranche upon the Duke of Savoy or Mr. Hill's notice of the French attempting those places, it was resolved the fleet should be in a constant readiness to go to their relief upon advice of their being insulted. But it was thought, before they could receive advice of it and could arrive there, it would be too late to prevent any misfortune to them, unless the fleet rendez-voused at Altea, the better to gain intelligence, and be nearer their assistance. And in consideration of the before-mentioned seven French men-of-war, and the security of the Turkey ships, it was not thought safe to make any detachments from the fleet at this season of the year, since they might meet with stronger squadrons, and it might prove a disappointment to the assisting of Nice or Villefranche, according to their Instructions.

On the 18th of April another council of war was held to consider of Her Majesty's orders of the 24th and 28th of March, and Mr. Secretary Hedges's letters ; and it was resolved to execute the

council of war of the 12th instant to proceed in the Straits; but if the Portuguese troops under the command of the Prince of Hesse, intended for Catalonia, could be embarked in eight or ten days, that they would remain there so long for them, leaving orders for the ships that were to come from England to join the fleet in Altea Bay; and if they found no orders there to the contrary, to repair to Algiers for their better security. And it was resolved, upon their arrival in the Straits, to send away a frigate to Nice to Mr. Hill, our resident at the Court of Savoy, for intelligence of the French fleet at Toulon; and upon his advising them that there was a prospect of their insulting Villefranche or Nice, then to consider how to execute Her Majesty's orders for their relief. It was their opinion, by the want of the major part of the English quota of ships, the rest might possibly be extremely exposed, even in this service, and they thought, debilitated, till they<sup>1</sup> joined them, from executing what Her Majesty expected from them.

The 21st of April they were joined by the Prince George, a Second Rate, four Third Rates, and two fireships; and Sir John Leake the next morning removed his flag on board the Prince George. The 24th, the transports and merchant ships were detached for England under convoy of three sail. The next day, at the desire of the King of Spain, a council of war was called of Flag Officers, upon a Paper of Proposals delivered His Catholic Majesty by the Almirante of Castile, proposing that,<sup>2</sup> in their way to the Mediterranean, their chief design should be to go to Barcelona

<sup>1</sup> The absentees.

<sup>2</sup> The Almirante's proposal are printed in full by Lediard, ii, 783-4.

to execute there what had been resolved on of so great benefit to the common cause; and if, when they were at Barcelona, they should receive advice from the Duke of Savoy that Nice was besieged, then the Admiral [ ]<sup>1</sup> to proceed to the relief of it; but if no such advice should come, then to put in execution the enterprise upon Barcelona. But if the Duke of Savoy should press going up thither, and it be found necessary to appoint a place of rendez-vous, all His Catholic Majesty desired, was, it might be at Barcelona, since even that would be of great advantage to the enterprise upon Spain. These proposals, all Her Majesty's orders, former councils of war, &c. being perused, and also the Lord Nottingham's letter of the 10th instant advising the enemy were preparing to attack those two places by sea, it was resolved to proceed directly to their relief, and to sail to the northward of the islands of Majorca and Minorca, and in case the wind permitted, to go as near the coast of Catalonia as might be convenient for their gaining intelligence; and upon certain advice that Villefranche and Nice were not attacked, to stop at Barcelona to give His Catholic Majesty's affairs what countenance and assistance they could. If they should have no certain advice till they arrived at Nice and Villefranche, and found they were not besieged, then they would return to Barcelona. And the Flag Officers were of opinion that four of the ships coming from England was a sufficient convoy to remain at Lisbon, to convoy the victuallers and transports to the fleet.

Pursuant to these resolutions, the fleet turned

<sup>1</sup> Supply 'was.'



down into the Bay of Oeiras<sup>1</sup> that evening ; and the 27th they sailed, leaving the Portuguese in great consternation, it being given out that the Admiral of France would soon be amongst them ; and these apprehensions were increased, when on the 22nd Count Toulouse appeared off the Rock of Lisbon. But he proceeded on his way to Cadiz, in order to join the Toulon squadron.<sup>2</sup>

The 29th, the fleet was off Cape St. Vincent, consisting of 35 sail of the line of battle. The 2nd of May, the Admirals struck their flags, in order to pass the Straits' mouth undiscovered, but the 4th in the morning hoisted them again. The 8th in the afternoon, it being hazy weather, six French ships of war fell in with the fleet, to chase which seven sail of ours were detached, but in two hours' time they gained so much, that their hulls disappeared. And this is one instance of many of the vast advantage the French had over us by the sailing of their ships, equally serviceable to pursue or to escape. The 10th the fleet anchored in Altea Bay, where the squadron that had been detached in pursuit of the six sail of French rejoined them, not having been able to come up with the enemy.

As soon as the fleet were anchored, a council of war was called to reconsider Her Majesty's orders of the 24th and 28th of March and the councils of war of the 18th and 25th ult. Whereupon, and their seeing a squadron of six of the enemy's ships off Cape Palos<sup>3</sup> (which their cruisers chased about thirty-six leagues to the E.S.E., by which

<sup>1</sup> 'Wares,' author's spelling.

<sup>2</sup> The Comte de Toulouse had command of the French squadron at Brest. He was being shadowed by Sir Clowdisley Shovell.

<sup>3</sup> Lat. 37.37 N., Long. 0.40 W.

it was very uncertain whether <sup>1</sup> they were bound to the westward or back to Toulon) it was agreed and resolved to prosecute their former resolutions of the 18th and 25th ult. without any alteration. But upon reading a proposal made by His Highness the Prince of Hesse, affirming how great an advantage it would be to the service of His Catholic Majesty for the fleet to touch and stay before Barcelona for twenty-four hours, it was resolved so to do, provided the wind hung westerly, so that they might fetch that port without any hindrance in their gaining a passage to Nice.

All the night the boats were employed in getting of water ; and the next morning the fleet sailed, and arrived at Barcelona the 17th. A flag of truce was presently sent to the Governor Don Francisco Velasco to summons him to surrender the town. But he would neither comply with the summons, nor admit the messenger that brought it. Hereupon, at His Highness's request, a council of war of Flag Officers was called the next day, and it was determined that, as there were no forces on board the fleet that could do any service on shore by reason of the want of officers, and in regard of Rear-Admiral Wishart's advice (who joined the fleet that day) of six large French ships of war he fell in with on Saturday last seven leagues to the eastward of Cape Palos (which it was probable were bound to the westward) that the chief thing they were to prosecute was to watch narrowly the French squadron at Toulon, for which purpose it was resolved to prosecute the resolution of the council of war of the 10th instant. However, upon the intelligence the Prince of Hesse received the next

<sup>1</sup> i.e., without discovering whether . . .

morning from Barcelona, that all matters were disposed there to seize the city for the King of Spain so soon as a show should be made of a bombardment and some forces landed, another council of war was held the 19th, and it was agreed to land the English marines and 400 Dutch, and to give the appearance of a bombardment ; but that the men should not be permitted to march beyond a secure retreat to their boats.

Accordingly the disposition was made, and three English and two Dutch ships of war went in to cover their landing, which was performed about eleven o'clock, to the number of 1400 English and 400 Dutch. At the same time the bomb-vessels approached the town to bombard it, which they did next morning, and hove in about sixty shells. This was not sufficient to make the Governor change his resolution. But it was believed he would have delivered up the city, if a soldier had not deserted and informed him of the circumstances of the fleet, and that by their orders they could not stay above a day or two. Encouraged by this and the small number of our land-forces, they sallied out with a party of horse to attack our camp ; which one of the frigates observing, made some shot so successfully amongst them, that obliged them to retire, leaving eight or ten of their company behind. However, it being apprehended the land-forces might be attacked by a superior number, the Prince of Hesse sent to acquaint the Admirals that as he had no prospect of gaining the city, he desired the forces might be continued ashore only till next morning, and be embarked by break of day ; and that the bomb-vessels, in the meantime, might continue to bombard the place to amuse them from interrupting the embarkation, which the



Flag Officers agreed to. Accordingly, about ten at night, the bomb-vessels began to play, and continued to do so till day-light, in which time they hove in about 136 shells.<sup>1</sup>

At four in the morning (being the 21st) the forces were embarked, and presently the fleet weighed, steering away for the Isles of Hyères<sup>2</sup>; but had such hard gales of wind, at N.N.W. and N.W., that it scattered and very much impaired their masts, rigging and sails. The 25th the dispersed fleet joined again, and by the Charles Galley from Lisbon they had advice that they fell<sup>3</sup> in with the French fleet, consisting of 36 sail of great ships from West France, and that they were gone into Cadiz. They had likewise advice by some French prisoners, taken at the Isles of Hyères in a boat, that a great fleet was expected from West France to Toulon, in which harbour were five three-deck ships, and four others ready to sail; besides eight more three-deck ships, which might soon be fitted out. Upon these advices, a council of war of Flag Officers was held the 25th of May, and it was resolved to make the best of their way for the Straits' mouth; and in case they met the enemy before they got thither, to use their utmost endeavours to engage them; and, if not, to repair before Cadiz and offer them battle, which if they did not accept of, then to make the best of their way to Lisbon, to join the

<sup>1</sup> 'Darmstadt proceeded to land his scanty troops and to throw a few bombs into the city, but he had no prospect of reducing it without the aid of insurrection, and no insurrection came. After a brief interval he saw no better course before him than to reembark his men and sail away. On their return to the Streights from this inglorious expedition, &c.' —Earl Stanhope, *Reign of Queen Anne*, p. 163.

<sup>2</sup> Near Toulon.

<sup>3</sup> (?) she had fallen.

rest of the ships, and to be supplied with stores and provisions, which were wanting to follow the enemy into the Mediterranean, or to meet them, if they should insult any part of the coast of Portugal; it being concluded, their intentions were to join the Toulon squadron, with the fleet at Cadiz.

The 27th at night, the scouts made the signal of seeing the French, whereupon the fleet tacked and followed them, standing to the eastward all night, concluding they would make the best of their way to Toulon; and at four the next morning, could discover from their topmast-heads between 30 and 40 sail. At six they tacked to the southward, drawing in a line of battle, but the enemy were then so far off, they could only see their topsails out of the water from the deck. About ten the Admiral called a council of war of Flag Officers, when, considering that the enemy seemed to avoid engaging them by their making all the sail they could possibly from them, it was resolved to continue the chase, as long as they could keep sight of them, or till they were in sight of Toulon, and afterwards to proceed to Lisbon according to their former resolution. Accordingly they continued to chase;<sup>1</sup> but, finding there was no probability of coming up with them, before they reached Toulon, where,

<sup>1</sup> Bishop Burnet, who (as Lediard observes, vol. ii, p. 790, *note*) is forward in speaking to the disadvantage of Rooke, upon this occasion says, 'The advantage he had was so visible, that it was expected he would have made towards them. He did not. What orders he had was not known, for the matter never came under examination. They got to Toulon, and he steered another way.' The falsity of this Right Reverend suggestion must be obvious to the reader; but it is the Bishop's way never to speak well of those whom he disliked.—*Author's Note.*

by the intelligence they had, there was a considerable number of ships, besides galleys, ready to come out and join them; and the Dutch Flag Officers being of opinion that it was not fit or reasonable, for the aforesaid considerations, to continue the chase further; it was therefore agreed at a council of the English Flag Officers, the 29th, to concur with them therein, and to pursue the resolution of the council of war of the 25th instant. (Signed), G. Rooke, J. Leake, T. Dilkes, J. Wishart.

In consequence of the resolutions above-mentioned, the fleet steered away for Lisbon, and the 7th of June watered in Altea Bay. The 14th they passed the Straits' mouth, and two days after were joined by Sir Clowdisley Shovell with 23 sail of men-of-war from England. Upon this reinforcement, it was thought proper at a council of war, the 17th, to be the most effectual service the fleet could go upon, to follow the enemy. But being [ ]<sup>1</sup> by Her Majesty's Instructions to have Their Majesties of Spain and Portugal's consent to what should be undertaken, it was their opinion they might co-operate in the siege of Cadiz, or the attempt on Barcelona again, in case a sufficient number of land-forces were sent with the fleet; but that till they could have Their Majesties' answers, they would lie in such a station within the Straits, as might prevent the enemy's fleet from going to Cadiz, and be near Nice and Villefranche, in case the enemy should attempt those places; but in case there should not be forces for the aforesaid services, and that the answers from Their Majesties should come in any reasonable time, they were of opinion to proceed up the Straits in quest of the enemy, it being

<sup>1</sup> 'bound' seems to be omitted here.



apparent (from their success at Barcelona) that the fleet's attempt upon any town or country without troops would be ineffectual; and at the King of Portugal's desire, it was resolved to send some ships to the Terceira Islands,<sup>1</sup> for the protection of the Brazil fleet.

The 21st of June another council of war was held off Lagos Bay; wherein, considering that if Their Majesties of Spain and Portugal came to any resolution for besieging Cadiz or any other attempt, they might make this trip into the Straits, water their ships, and possibly alarm and deter the ships at Toulon from going to sea, and be back time enough for the performance of the aforesaid services; it was resolved to execute the resolution of the 17th instant by going into the Straits; and, while the wind continued easterly, to stand into the shore, and endeavour to get water and other refreshments for their men. And at another council, the 28th, having considered a letter from Mr. Methuen, the English ambassador at the Court of Portugal, proposing the attempting Cadiz (in which they could come to no resolution, till they knew the proposition and resolution of the Kings of Spain and Portugal, to which in his letter he referred) they were of opinion it might be practicable, if there was an army and proper utensils of war for carrying on a siege; and [ ]<sup>2</sup> that they were ready and desirous to co-operate in so great a design; and resolved, if Rear-Admiral Byng did not join them by the next day at noon, to go through the Straits and leave orders at Tangier for his following them to the rendez-vous to the eastward of Tetuan; and, notwithstanding any

<sup>1</sup> Azores.

<sup>2</sup> Supply 'they said.'

former resolutions for watering on the Barbary shore, that they would water on the Spanish coast. The 22nd of June, they anchored in Lagos Bay, but weighed again the 24th.

July the 5th, Admiral Wassenauer brought an account that he saw the day before 14 sail of great ships coming out of the Straits' month; and that he met the Monk, who was coming to give notice that there were 40 sail of great ships seen off Malaga. Upon this intelligence, a council of war was called off Cadiz; and it was resolved to make the best of their way before Cadiz, and endeavour to intercept them from getting into that port; but, if they should be got in there already, then to come to an anchor off the town, and consider whether it was advisable to force the place and insult them in the bay. But if they were not there, it was agreed to keep to the northward and westward, with an easy sail all night, to keep the wind of them, and range away to the southward in a long line all day, till they should see or hear of them, or till they got as far southerly as Cape Spartel.

The 7th they came to Cape Malaga, being very little wind and calm. Here they sent the marines ashore to cover their watering. The inhabitants fired on our men at their first landing; but, receiving a proper return, they soon desisted; and, the fleet having watered, sailed the 11th. The 16th, the Admiral having received the King of Spain's proposals for attempting Cadiz, a council of war was called thereupon the next day, the fleet being then about seven leagues to the eastward of Tetuan, and the attempt upon Cadiz was determined impracticable, without an army to co-operate with the fleet. This design being laid aside, they then took into consideration what other service might be practicable: and

they came to a resolution, to land the marines both English and Dutch, under the command of the Prince of Hesse, in the Bay of Gibraltar, to cut off that town from any communication with the main; and at the same time to bombard and cannonade the place, and endeavour to reduce it to the obedience of the King of Spain.

This enterprise upon Gibraltar had been thought on some time before by Vice-Admiral Leake as the most advantageous conquest that could be made for the benefit of trade, as well as the fleet, during the war with France and Spain; and therefore it had been proposed by him to the Admiral and the Prince of Hesse, who both approved of it; but, being restrained by their orders to act no otherwise than with the approbation of the Kings of Spain and Portugal, who were bent upon the attempt of Barcelona and Cadiz, though they would contribute no land-forces to the effecting of either, the Admirals could not act as they thought most beneficial to the common cause. But no sooner was the expedition to Cadiz judged impracticable, and they were at liberty, than the attempt against Gibraltar immediately took place, as the most agreeable and beneficial service they could go upon.

The fortress of Gibraltar is a small, but very strong, city and castle in the province of Andalusia; seated at the foot of a rocky mountain, which makes a peninsula, and is joined to the rest of Spain only by a small isthmus of land. By its situation it commands the trade, and is the key of the Mediterranean Sea, being at the opening of the Straits' mouth opposite to Apes' Hill in Barbary, at about seven leagues distance; which two hills were the famous Herculean Pillars, of which there have been so many uncertain traditions. The Bay wherein the town lies, is



also a very commodious harbour for the largest ships, there being likewise two moles projecting into the Bay from the walls of the town, making a secure retreat for smaller vessels. Thus [ ]<sup>1</sup> happily situated for the protection of trade and annoyance of an enemy; but more especially useful in the war with France and Spain, when we had no port in the Mediterranean.

According to the resolutions of the Flag Officers, the fleet on the 20th pushed over from the Barbary shore; and the next day, at three in the afternoon, the marines, to the number of 1800, were landed by the Prince of Hesse Darmstadt's direction on the neck of land to the northward of the town, to cut off all communication with the country; and a summons was sent to the Governor to surrender the place for the service of His Catholic Majesty; to which he returned answer that the garrison had taken an oath of fidelity to their natural lord King Philip V and that as faithful and loyal subjects, they would sacrifice their lives in the defence of the city. Hereupon, the 22nd in the morning, twelve Third Rates, four Fourth, with six of the Dutch, and three bombs, were ordered in to bombard and cannonade the place. But the wind blowing contrary, they could not take their posts till the day was spent. However, the bombs made a beginning, and hove in seventeen shells. In the meantime, to amuse the enemy, some boats were sent in, who burnt a French privateer of 12 guns at the Old Mole. The next day by five in the morning, the signal was given to begin the cannonade, and likewise for the bombs to play, which was done with great fury till eleven, when they fired more leisurely, plying only their lower tier. By this time, the enemy being beaten

<sup>1</sup> 'is the place,' seems omitted here.

from their guns, especially at the South Mole Head, all the boats manned and armed were sent under the command of Captain Whitaker<sup>1</sup> to endeavour to possess themselves of that post. Accordingly they landed, but were no sooner on shore than the enemy sprung a mine, which blew up the fortifications upon the Mole, with the loss of two lieutenants, and 40 seamen blown to pieces, and 60 others wounded. Notwithstanding which, they kept possession of the platform; and advancing, took a redoubt, or detached small bastion, half way between the Mole and the town, and possessed themselves of many of the enemy's cannon. It being Sunday, the women were at their devotions at a little chapel out of the town, and by this means were cut off from the city; and this made their husbands in the place more importunate with the Governor to capitulate.

Upon this success, the Prince of Hesse sent a message to the Governor, peremptorily [ ]<sup>2</sup> to surrender the town at the North Gate, where the marines were; and considering he had but a small garrison, not able to stand an assault, he desired to capitulate, and had honourable articles granted him. The Prince immediately marched in and took possession of the town, where he found about 100 guns mounted, but the garrison no more than 150 men. It was certainly a most gross neglect of Spain to have no better garrison there, unless it be that depending upon the natural strength of the place, they thought it sufficient; for Father Daniel, a French historian, speaking of this enterprise, says, 'Nevertheless fifty men

<sup>1</sup> Of the Dorsetshire. For this action he received the honour of knighthood.

<sup>2</sup> Supply 'summoning him.'

might have defended the works against thousands, and the attack made by the seamen was brave almost beyond example.' But though this action was certainly very brave, yet the Frenchman seems to exaggerate the matter, to lessen so palpable a mistake in their own politics, and excuse the Governor for giving up the place so easily.<sup>1</sup> This important conquest was made with the loss only of two lieutenants, one master, and 60 common seamen killed : and one captain, seven lieutenants, one boatswain, and about 216 common seamen wounded.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> If the town was so strong, as he says, then was the Governor inexcusable to yield it up so easily ; Sir George, and the rest of the Admirals, were very inconsiderate to attempt it ; and the folly of the French and Spaniards afterwards much greater to attempt it, when defended by a brave English garrison. But if it was not so strong as he makes it (as it certainly was not), then though the taking of it will not appear altogether so glorious as being so much easier effected, yet, it shows the enterprise to have been well concerted by the English Admirals, justifies the conduct of the Governor, and makes the success of this undertaking owing to the wretched politics of the French, to leave this frontier so unguarded.—*Author's Note.*

<sup>2</sup> For the campaign as a whole see Burchett, pp. 662-78, and Lediard, ii, 780-90. Concerning the attack on the Rock, additional details may be derived from *Memoirs relating to the Lord Torrington*, pp. 138-45, and from the *Journal* of the Chaplain of the Ranelagh, reprinted in the same volume (Camden Society's Publications, vol. xlvi, pp. 190-5). The Spanish view is given in the dispatch of the Governor, Don Diego de Salinas, reprinted by Duro (*Armada Española*, vol. vi, Appendix). See also Lopez de Ayala, *Historia de Gibraltar*. Stanhope in his account of the capture of the fortress (*Reign of Queen Anne*, p. 164) has popularized a story which has been discredited by Sir Julian Corbett, *England in the Mediterranean*, vol. ii, chap. xxxi., and Colonel Parnell *The War of the Succession in Spain*, Chap. vii. For the animadversions of Bishop Burnet on Rooke, see Rear-Admiral Penrose Fitzgerald in Sir John Laughton's *Howard to Nelson*, 127-58.



## CHAPTER V

*Proceedings of the fleet after the reduction of Gibraltar till their return to England. A particular account of the Malaga engagement, wherein Sir John Leake forces the van of the French ; and is left abroad with a squadron for the Winter Guard.*

AFTER the reduction of Gibraltar a council of war was called the 25th of July to consider how to dispose of the fleet the remaining part of the campaign ; and it was agreed that before the forces (that were necessary to accompany the fleet in any descent upon the coast of Spain) could come to the fleet, it would be too late in the year to proceed so far up the Straits as Barcelona to make any attempt upon that place ; besides, the Dutch had no provisions to supply them for so remote and long an expedition : but that, if Their Catholic and Portuguese Majesties could procure an army and materials for the siege of Cadiz, they might be able to co-operate with them till the 15th of September, N.S., but no longer, provided that the forces that were in Gibraltar were relieved, for they could spare no men from the fleet. And it was determined, for the security of Gibraltar, to remain there with the fleet till an answer should come from Portugal, and, while the wind continued westerly, to send squadrons over to the Barbary coast, and water, to enable them to go upon any service proposed.

The 26th, Sir John Leake with his division sailed for the coast of Barbary to water, as did Sir Clowdisley Shovell with his division and some of the Dutch, but were forced back to Gibraltar two days after. The 1st of August the whole fleet sailed for the Barbary shore; and the 9th following, having completed their watering, they stood<sup>1</sup> over for the Spanish shore within sight of the high land of Gibraltar, when, about eight in the morning, the *Centurion*, one of our scouts, made the signal of seeing the enemy's fleet, as their scouts also did of seeing ours; Ceuta Point then bearing W. by S. about six leagues distant.<sup>2</sup>

Immediately the fleet formed themselves into a line of battle; and a council of war was called, consisting of the English and Dutch Admirals, viz. Sir George Rooke, Admiral Sir Clowdisley Shovell, Sir John Leake, Rear-Admirals Byng, Dilkes, and Wishart; and of the Dutch, Lieutenant Admiral Callenburgh and Vice-Admiral Baron Wassenaer. The commander of the *Centurion*, coming on board, acquainted the council of war that that morning he saw the enemy's fleet about ten leagues to windward of them, consisting of 66 sail. Upon this advice, it was resolved to endeavour to get half the marines on board from Gibraltar, and lay to the eastward of that port, while the wind should be easterly, to receive and engage the enemy; and, in case the wind should shift westerly and the enemy declined the engagement, then to follow them as far to the eastward as Cape Malaga (concluding that if they retired so far, they would not probably stop till they got near Toulon, whither they had not provisions to follow them) in case the season

<sup>1</sup> *Sc.* were standing.    <sup>2</sup> 'distance,' author's spelling.

of the year would admit of it.<sup>1</sup> At noon Ceuta Point bore S.W. by W. five leagues distant and Gibraltar N.W., the wind being east.

The enemy, not bearing down<sup>2</sup> upon the confederates, gave them an opportunity to send for half of the 1800 marines which had been left at Gibraltar, leaving the other half under the command of the Prince of Hesse Darmstadt to keep the place. The two following days were spent in plying to windward in pursuit of the enemy, having had no further account of them but following them by the report of their signal-guns : but the last day, one of the enemy's ships (that probably was directed to observe the motions of our fleet) was chased ashore by the cruisers and burnt. Thus having followed them with a pressed sail at least for forty-eight hours without being able to get sight of them, and considering the circumstances and condition they had left Gibraltar in (with a weak garrison ; their carriages and guns not fully repaired, mounted, and<sup>3</sup> in a condition for service ; neither gunners to manage those that were), besides<sup>4</sup> the victuallers and bombs lay exposed in case the enemy should slip by them

<sup>1</sup> Earl Stanhope's description of the battle of Malaga will help the reader to appreciate the more ' particular ' account that follows.

' The two fleets met off the coast of Malaga on the 24th of August and engaged in a heavy cannonade, which was closed by the approach of night and which can scarcely be dignified with the name of battle. Some thousand men were either killed or wounded, but no one ship was either sunk or taken.'—*Reign of Queen Anne*, p. 165.

<sup>2</sup> Because they were putting their trust in their galleys, which had been temporarily left behind at Malaga. Toulouse's first task was to combine his squadron under sail with his squadron under oars.

<sup>3</sup> *Sc.* Or.

<sup>4</sup> *Sc.* Not to mention the fact that.



and put away to the westward in the night and insult them ; and [     ]<sup>1</sup> they had no prospect of coming up with the enemy if they intended (as they seemed) to avoid them—it was determined at a council of war (by the aforementioned Flag Officers for the above-said reasons) that, in case they could not discover the enemy's fleet before night, they would make the best of their way to the Straits' mouth, and lay there forty-eight hours in expectation of them ; but in case they should not appear in that time, then to go<sup>2</sup> into the Bay of Gibraltar, land the marines, gunners and carpenters, and endeavour to put the place into a condition not to fear any insults by sea or land.

But soon after this, standing in towards the shore, they discovered the enemy's fleet and galleys to the westward near Cape Malaga, and bore after them in a Line of Battle all that night. The next morning, being Sunday the 13th of August, there being a moderate gale of wind and hazy weather, about five o'clock in the morning they saw the French fleet about three leagues to leeward, forming themselves into a Line of Battle by the help of their galleys, and brought-to with their heads to the southward, the wind being easterly, lying ready to receive the Confederates. They were 50 ships in the line, with 24 galleys, besides frigates and fireships, &c. ; our line consisting of 51 ships, besides frigates, &c. ; both pretty equal as to strength. But the Confederates were indifferently manned, and short of their complements.

The van of the French was commanded by the Marquis de Villette, Lieutenant-General, with the White and Blue squadrons, having in his

<sup>1</sup> Supply 'as.'

<sup>2</sup> Sc. They would go.

second line the Duke of Tursis with seven French and five Spanish galleys, two frigates, and four fireships. The Count Toulouse commanded the centre with the White Squadron, having in his second line the Marquis de Roye, with four galleys, four frigates, two fireships, and two flûtes.<sup>1</sup> The rear was commanded by the Marquis Langeron, having in his second line eight French galleys, three frigates, and three fireships. The Confederate fleet was commanded in the van by Sir Cloudisley Shovell, Admiral of the White, and Sir John Leake, Vice-Admiral of the Blue, the latter with his squadron or division leading the van ; having in their second line two frigates, three fireships, and one hospital ship. The centre of the Confederates was commanded by Sir George Rooke, Admiral, with Rear-Admiral Byng, and Rear-Admiral Dilkes ; having in the second line two frigates, four fireships, two bombs, one yacht and one hospital ship. And two ships of 50 guns each, two frigates and two fireships, formed a third line in the centre, with orders to lie to windward, that in case the enemy's van should push through the Confederate line with their galleys and fireships, they might give them some diversion. The rear was composed of the Dutch squadron.

But the disposition of the two fleets will much better appear by the annexed line of battle, which contains an exact list of the ships on both sides, as they were drawn up immediately before the battle begun ; which I have been the more particular in, to clear up some mistakes that have generally prevailed, both as to the strength of the whole and the different parts.

<sup>1</sup> The Flûte was a round-sterned ship of burden analogous to the ' Fly-boat ' or the sixteenth-century ' Hulk.'

ENGLISH LINE. <sup>1</sup>				FRENCH LINE. <sup>1</sup>			
SHIPS.	MEN.	GUNS.		SHIPS.	MEN.	GUNS.	
Yarmouth	440	70		<i>Eclatant</i>	730	96	
Norfolk	500	80		<i>Ceolus</i>	380	62	
Berwick	440	70		ST. PHILIPPE	700	90	
PRINCE GEORGE	700	90		<i>Heureux</i>	450	70	
Boyne	500	80		<i>Rubis</i>	330	56	
Newark	500	80		<i>Arrogant</i>	350	62	
Lennox	440	70		<i>Marquis</i>	350	60	
Tilbury	280	50		<i>Constant</i>	450	70	
Swiftsure	440	70		<i>FIER</i>	800	88	
BARFLEUR	710	90		<i>Intrépide</i>	600	84	
Namur	680	90		<i>Excellent</i>	350	62	
Orford	440	70		<i>Sage</i>	330	54	
Assurance	440	66		<i>Ecueil</i>	380	62	
Nottingham	365	60		<i>Magnifique</i>	600	86	
Warspight	440	70		MONARQUE	600	84	
Burford	440	70		<i>Perle</i>	300	54	
Monk	305	60		<i>Furieux</i>	350	60	
Cambridge	500	80		<i>Vermadois</i>	350	63	
Kent	460	70		<i>Lys</i>	600	88	
Royal Oak	500	80		TONNANT	700	90	
Suffolk	440	70		<i>Orgueilleux</i>	600	88	
Redford	440	70		<i>Espérance</i>	350	50	
Shrewsbury	500	80		<i>Séneux</i>	380	58	
Monmouth	440	70		<i>Fleurion</i>	450	70	
Eagle	440	70		<i>Terrible</i>	900	104	
ROYAL CATHERINE	730	90		FOUDROYANT	950	104	

7 French and 5 Spanish galleys, 2 frigates of 30 guns each, and 4 fireships.

4 Gallies and 2 flôtes of 6 guns each, 4 frigates of 36, 28, 12 and 10 guns, and 2 fireships.

M.D'Infeville, Vice-Admiral of the White and Blue.

M. de Villette, Admiral of the White and Blue.

M. de Belle-Isle-Brard, Rear-Admiral of the White and Blue.

M. Coëtlogon, Vice-Admiral of the White.

Count Toulouse, Admiral.

The Swallow and Panther of 50 guns each, the Lark of 40, Newport 24, and 2 fireships.

Tartar 32 guns, 1 fire-ship, Sir George Rooke, Ad-  
miral, 1 hospital, 2 bombs, 2 fireships, 1 yacht, Sir George Rooke, Ad-  
miral.

Koebuck 40 guns, 2 fireships, 1 hospital, Sir Clowdisley Shovell, Admiral of the White.

Garland, 40 guns, 1 fire-ship, Vice-Admiral of the Blue.



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4 Galleys and 2 flûtes of 6 guns each, 4 frigates of 36, 28, 12 and 10 guns, and 2 fire-ships.

8 Galleys, 3 frigates of 30, 24 and 11 guns, and 3 fireships.

[illegible]

1 Spelling of names corrected from Troude, *Batailles Navales de la France*, i, 250.

2 (i) Mercure.

In this posture the fleets lay, when the van of the Confederates, led by Sir John Leake, bore down upon the enemy, they standing with their heads to the southward. About nine o'clock, Sir John got within gunshot of the French Vice-Admiral of the White and Blue, that led their van in a Second Rate;<sup>1</sup> and he endeavoured, all that possibly he could, to get close to him before he engaged; for, knowing the want of shot to continue a long engagement, he was willing to make the best use of those he had, and force the enemy before they discovered our weakness. But the French Vice-Admiral, perhaps for the same reason, avoided it, making sail sometimes, and then shortening sail again, so that he could not get nearer than half-gun shot.

A little after ten o'clock, the Confederate line being about half-gunshot from the enemy's, they set all their sails at once and seemed to stretch ahead and weather our fleet; so that Sir George Rooke thought it necessary to stop them by putting out the signal for battle. Accordingly, about half an hour past ten, the engagement was begun by some ships in the centre, as Sir John Leake did in the van by firing a broadside upon the French Vice-Admiral, and continued<sup>2</sup> to engage him sharply, within half-gun shot for an hour and a half. But the St. Philippe sailing better than the Prince George, he<sup>3</sup> galed<sup>4</sup> ahead,

<sup>1</sup> The Chevalier D'Infreville in the St. Philippe.

<sup>2</sup> The author's syntax is here a little obscure. Perhaps his meaning is, 'About half-past ten the engagement was begun by some ships in our centre. At the same moment Sir John Leake, leading the allied van, opened with his broadsides on the French Vice-Admiral and continued, &c.'

<sup>3</sup> M. D'Infreville, Vice-Admiral of the White and Blue.

<sup>4</sup> Slacked his bowlines, eased his sheets, and running free, drew ahead.

and engaged the Berwick, the ships astern of him following. By this means Vice-Admiral Leake, with his squadron, which consisted but of six sail (three being wanting), was engaged with thirteen of the enemy's ships for some time, till at length, about an hour past two, the French Vice-Admiral and his squadron bore out of the line, very much disabled, and continued to bear away, till they got about a mile to leeward. And soon after, the rest of the enemy's van did the like, and returned no more to the battle. Upon this defeat of the French van, Sir John Leake dispatched his Captain (Captain Martin) to Sir Clowdisley Shovell, proposing to push the enemy's van, till he broke their line, or obliged their centre to draw off. But Sir Clowdisley did not approve of the proposal, whereby the greatest part of our van remained spectators only during the rest of the engagement.

The Dutch, in the rear, maintained the fight with great bravery the whole day, and spent so great a quantity of gunpowder, that during the action they were obliged to have cartridges filled. The Admiral in the centre fought with great intrepidity, and maintained the fight by downright English valour against the main force of the French fleet. And several ships were obliged to leave the line for want of shot ; but after our van had beaten that of the enemy, the line being closed, that deficiency was effectually supplied, and the Admiral was thereby enabled to continue the battle till night put an end to it ; and then the enemy went away to leeward by the help of their galleys. In the meantime the Admirals, considering what was to be done, agreed, in case of further action, to come as close to the enemy as possible, and having discharged



the few great shot they had left, to board each his ship and fight it out with small arms.

In the night the wind shifted to the northward, and in the morning to the west, whereby the French had the weather gage, and might have renewed the battle, which it was not in the power of the Confederates to do. But the enemy not inclining to fight, the two fleets lay at about two leagues distance, looking upon one another, and repairing the damages they had received. At length the French plied to windward. Whilst this was doing, the Confederates were rummaging for shot, and preparing to receive the enemy in the best manner they could, in which interim a council of Flag Officers was called ; and taking into consideration the present circumstances of the fleet, which being disabled from attacking the enemy with that vigour which was intended by reason of the want of ammunition, particularly shot ; and that notwithstanding they had lain by all that day to receive them in the best manner they could ; after making a distribution of the small quantity of ammunition they had left in expectation they would have come down upon them, it was resolved they should make the best of their way to Gibraltar, as well for the security of that garrison, as to repair, as well as possible, the disabled ships ; most of them being so in their masts and yards. The Prince George, in particular, was so disabled that they could by no means trim their sails to work the ship. Upon this resolution to receive the enemy, each Admiral enquired into the quantity of ammunition that was left in their respective divisions. Sir John Leake found very few shot amongst the ships of his squadron, several of them having been without for above two hours before the

engagement ended, they having continued to fire with powder only to deceive the enemy. The Prince George had but three rounds for the upper and quarter-deck guns, and none left of the middle and lower tier. Nor were the rest of the fleet better provided, so that it was a great happiness the enemy were ignorant of their weakness.

The French fleet kept at a distance all the day, not caring to renew the fight, which the Confederates *could* not ; and having filled their sails, and stood northward all night, together with the help of their galleys, by the next morning they were got four or five leagues to windward. But a little before noon, there springing up a small breeze at east, the Confederate fleet edged down towards the enemy till past four in the afternoon ; and it being then too late to engage, they brought to and lay by with their heads to the northward all night. Thus they braved the French, and concealed their own weakness ; for, to speak the truth, as they were not in a condition, so neither were they desirous, to come to a second engagement.

The 16th the wind continued easterly, with hazy weather, and the enemy not being seen, nor any of their scouts, the Confederates bore away for the westward, supposing they were gone for Cadiz ; but being advised from Gibraltar and the coast of Barbary that they had not passed the Straits, it was concluded they were retired to Toulon, and a council of war being called, it was determined to proceed to Gibraltar, according to their former resolution. The Marquis de Villadarias was then marching with an army to besiege Gibraltar ; and, to intimidate the garrison, sent a letter to the Prince of Hesse,

acquainting him that the French had burnt eight of our ships, taken sixteen, and sunk seven ; allowing the French had lost four men-of-war and one galley. But His Highness returned answer that he had the misfortune to be quite mistaken, for he had just then received advice of the contrary.

In this action, the damage on both sides was thought to be pretty equal. There was not one ship destroyed or taken on either side during the action, but two of the enemy's galleys were seen to sink, and many of their ships were so disabled, they were towed off by the galleys. As to the loss of men on the enemy's part, it could not be less than that of the Confederates, notwithstanding the want of shot ; their manner of firing chiefly wounding the masts and rigging (as if to secure a retreat rather than a victory). Whereas our shot, being levelled at the hulls, must consequently kill <sup>1</sup> many more than they did of the Confederates. *The Paris Gazette*, indeed, makes their loss but 1500 men, killed and wounded, which could hardly be the moiety of them ; but by another relation of their own from on board the French fleet, after having given an account of the battle, it follows, 'All that troubles us is the great number of brave men we have lost on this occasion ; but a battle like this can never happen without the loss of abundance of gallant men.' This intimates their loss to have been very considerable ; and amongst these was M. de Belle-Isle-Erard a Flag-Officer, Rear-Admiral of the White and Blue, the Bailli de Lorraine,<sup>2</sup> the Chevaliers de Lannéon<sup>3</sup> and Phelypeaux,<sup>4</sup> and 31 others of

<sup>1</sup> Have killed.

<sup>2</sup> Captain of the *Mercure*.

<sup>3</sup> Captain of the *Vainqueur*.

<sup>4</sup> Captain of the *Content*.



distinction ; and amongst the wounded, the Count de Toulouse himself, the Count de Relingue,<sup>1</sup> Lieutenant-General Monsieur du Casse,<sup>2</sup> a Flag Officer the Count de Sepville,<sup>3</sup> Monsieur d'Arbault Intendant-General, the Marquis de Chateaurenault,<sup>4</sup> the Chevaliers of Montgon and Rochelaw,<sup>5</sup> Comigne, Bodinas, d'Agençon ; and 102 others of distinction. On the part of the Confederates were slain only three captains, viz., Sir Andrew Lake<sup>6</sup> and Captain Cowe,<sup>7</sup> of the English, and one Captain of the Dutch, four lieutenants, and about 900 common seamen ; and four captains, 14 lieutenants, 13 inferior officers, and about 1900 common sailors wounded ; whereof on board the Prince George were 15 killed, and 75 wounded ; of which 24 died of their wounds. Sir John Leake and his Captain, Captain Martin, were likewise both wounded by splinters ; and this was the first blood Admiral Leake ever lost in battle, though he had so often and so freely exposed himself. By this account it appears what reason the French had to boast, when (supposing the number of common seamen to be near equal) yet what a destruction they had in officers and persons of distinction more than the Confederates is manifest from their own accounts.

Sir George Rooke, in his account of the battle, says, he never observed the true English spirit

<sup>1</sup> Captain of the *Terrible*. His leg was shattered and he died of the wound.

<sup>2</sup> The famous opponent of Benbow, 1702 ; at this time a Chef d'Escadre.

<sup>3</sup> Rear-Admiral of the Blue.

<sup>4</sup> Son of Torrington's opponent at Bantry Bay ; at this time Captain of the *Oriflamme*, a name that does not occur in our author's list.

<sup>5</sup> Captain of the *Excellent*.

<sup>6</sup> Captain of the *Grafton*.

<sup>7</sup> Of the *Ranelagh*.

so apparent and prevalent in our seamen as on this occasion ; and Sir Clowdisley, in his account, observes the engagement was very sharp ; and he thought the like between two fleets never had been in his time : that there was hardly a ship but was obliged to shift one mast, and some must shift all, insomuch that there were not three spare topmasts in the fleet.

The French, to give them their due, though forced in the van to give way, yet behaved themselves remarkably well ; for this was the most equal, and consequently the hardest struggle for mastery, that has happened between an English and a French fleet ; I say, the most equal, because till this time the French never ventured a battle (when they could avoid it) but with great odds on their side. Even in this they had many advantages. They were all clean, full manned and (in case of a defeat) had their own ports at hand to retire to. Whereas the Confederates, besides the great deficiency of stores, ammunition and provisions, both naval and military (the one the effect of a long voyage, and the other the consequence of attempting Barcelona, and taking Gibraltar) were weakly manned and foul, of infinite prejudice in the day of battle ; since it hinders from pursuing an advantage, or avoiding a misfortune ; all which nevertheless they overcame, by downright English valour ; and if many of the ships had not wanted shot, 'tis highly probable the Confederates would have gained an uncontested victory. Even as it was, they carried their point, which was to disable the French fleet from assisting the Spaniards in the retaking Gibraltar. And whether they will allow the victory to the Confederates or not, the French were so well beaten that they never ventured their

fleet to hazard a second battle during the war, and went so disabled into Toulon that they could not be repaired in many months.

Whatever advantages may be allowed the confederates in this engagement, the greatest applause was certainly due to Vice-Admiral Leake. He gained the only apparent advantage of<sup>1</sup> the enemy, who else might have laid claim to the honour of the day; and proposed the only means whereby to have made it a complete victory. The French indeed gave themselves airs, as if fortune had been on their side; and even in England some were so ungenerous as to call it, at best, a drawn battle.<sup>2</sup> But some even insinuated

<sup>1</sup> Over.

<sup>2</sup> This is a mild way of stating the case. Earl Stanhope, describing how the University of Oxford memorialized the crown in January, 1705, and offered their sincere and hearty congratulations for the double success of Blenheim and Malaga, continues, 'The Queen gave a cold reply and the Duke's friends were much offended. It was felt moreover that observing how very nearly equal in force Rooke had been to Toulouse, and bearing in mind how constantly the English had prevailed at sea, *his distant and doubtful cannonade* rendered him liable to censure rather than entitled to praise. At this juncture, then, it was announced that Prince George, as Lord High Admiral, had superseded Rooke as Commander-in-Chief of the fleet, naming in his place Sir Cloudesley Shovel,' *Reign of Queen Anne*, p. 172.

Though wrong in the reason he alleges for Rooke's retirement, Lord Stanhope is of course perfectly correct in calling attention to the national ingratitude which drove him from the public service. How bitterly the persecuted Admiral felt the base treatment he received is well shown in the thirteenth of the newly discovered Letters from his pen first published in 1913 (*History*, First Series, vol. ii, No. 2). Writing on 22 February, 1705, he says, 'I will only tell you that my services of the last year have been so ill received by some, and so ill rewarded by others, that I could no longer forbear gratifying my inclinations to quit the command of the fleet, to which my long indisposition gave me a fair pretence;



our fleet declined the battle and retired ; than which nothing could be more scandalous and false. For if pursuing the enemy four days, and forcing them to engage, beating one third of their fleet out of the line, and pursuing them afterwards, whilst they avoided a further engagement ; if this, and frustrating the expedition they were designed for, maintaining the conquest we had made, obliging the enemy to retire into harbour, whilst the Confederates remained masters of the sea (so well secured by this battle that the French never durst face us with a fleet afterwards) ; if all these circumstances be not the evident marks of a victory, there never can be one.

But I cannot conclude this account quite so much to the honour of the Confederates as Mr. Burchett and others from<sup>1</sup> him have done ; for not satisfied to have worsted the French under great disadvantages, and in a manner unarmed, he adds, ' This battle was so much the more glorious to Her Majesty's arms, because the enemy had the advantage of 600 great guns.'<sup>2</sup>

though I should be very sorry not to be able to give better reasons to my friends. It was very apparent that my enemies upon any misfortune would be sure to persecute and condemn me, and as plain that my friends would not support or protect me. So that I thought fit, though with some reluctance, to quit the honour of meeting M. Toulouse this summer to those who may hope to obtain some justice in consideration of their service. The House of Lords have been by a private committee (the Duke of Bolton in the chair) all this session upon the cold hunt to discover miscarriages in the fleet the last summer ; and, not being able to find any faults, they have thought fit to say nothing. So that where I can't be marked with a public censure, I must not expect to be justified.'

<sup>1</sup> Following.

<sup>2</sup> I cannot discover that Burchett says anything of the kind. His account of the battle will be found on pp. 678-9. In his comments he says, ' Nor had the English and the Dutch

This mistake proceeded, no doubt, from Sir George Rooke's own account to the Admiralty, wherein he says as much, and certainly believed so at the time he wrote it. Sir Clowdisley Shovell too in his account, though he does not mention the exact number of guns they exceeded us in, says the enemy had seventeen three-decked ships, and we had but seven, which implies a great superiority. It is pretty extraordinary the accounts of both these admirals should agree to exaggerate the strength of the enemy; which to those who knew not the honour and integrity of the men, might seem purposely intended to raise the reputation of the action, or to excuse themselves to the public for not making the victory more complete. But from these men it could only be through a hasty error, transmitted home by the first occasion upon the best information they had then received, and this account having once had the credit and sanction of the public, it was not necessary to undeceive them, in a point which was so much to the honour of the nation in general, and this action in particular. This, however, is the only instance of the kind that I know of; all the relations in general of our successes, as well as losses by sea and land, during both the wars with France, having been so impartial, that the like is not to be met with in the accounts of any other nation. Nevertheless this error has passed hitherto, so as never to have been contradicted that I know of. And here I must observe that the Dutch accounts of the battle are quite silent

any great reason to value themselves on their success, otherwise than that, by putting a good face on it, they shewed themselves ready to try their fortune a second time, while the French were retreating towards their ports, as hath already been observed' (p. 680).

in the matter, not pretending any superiority ; which might make this affair questionable, because it tended as much to their honour as ours. But the list of both fleets being published soon after these relations, any one that would have taken the trouble to examine them must have observed the mistake. Mr. Lediard, who is glad of every opportunity to correct Mr. Burchett and is so wonderful exact, has nevertheless copied this error ; and in order to clear the matter, has given the reader lists of both fleets ; but in his calculations upon those lists, he has the misfortune to be mistaken in almost every instance.<sup>1</sup> In the English line, he has reckoned up the total of the men and guns of the whole list, though he tells you four were upon convoy, and two in the third line as reserve ; yet omits twelve sail of Dutch, whereof he makes no account for men and guns, though the design of his lists was to compare the strength of the two fleets. And even the total of the Confederate list is cast up wrong, both men and guns. So in the French list. His first article is a ship of 66 guns, which should be 96 ; the number of men, which is 730, might easily have corrected that mistake. Likewise the total of men in the whole division is made 8300, instead of 8830. The total of the whole number of men is indeed right, but the guns are wrong in total, though right as to particulars. Having therefore no satisfaction in this point from Mr. Burchett, or the exact Mr. Lediard, I shall examine the state of this matter by the foregoing list, which I think to be a true one. By this it appears, the total of the English amounted to 18,285, of the Dutch 4258, making

<sup>1</sup> *Naval History*, vol. ii, pp. 791-3.



together 22,543. The total of the English guns 2826, of the Dutch 788, total of the confederate guns 3614. The total of men in the French fleet 24,275, total of the French guns 3577; whereby it appears, the Confederates had the superiority of 37 guns, and the French had the superiority of 1732 men; but deducting from the Confederates 900 marines, part of their complements in garrison at Gibraltar, and at least 1000 more they were short of complement, the difference will be 3632.

But how comes it then, that the enemy could have 17 three-decked ships, that is, 10 more than the Confederates.<sup>1</sup> This account is indeed very fallacious. For though it is true the Confederates had but seven three-decked ships, they had nine other two-decked ships of 80 guns each, equal to the same number upon three decks, carrying the same weight of metal, and being therefore of equal force and equally serviceable; for most of our 80 gun ships at that time were of two decks. And comparing the strength of the great ships on both sides together, the odds will be but small; for the French had 18 ships of 80 guns and upwards, and the Confederates had 16. It is true some of the enemy's ships were First Rates: but then of ships from 60 to 80 guns, the French had but 20, and the Confederates had 30, and under 60 guns we had but 5 in the line, and they had 12, which upon the whole, I conceive, makes ample amends.

I should now have done with this memorable battle, but it being the only general engagement that happened during the war, to give occasion to examine the conduct of both parties, I shall

<sup>1</sup> See Sir Julian Corbett, *England in the Mediterranean*, vol. ii, p. 527, note.

therefore make some few observations upon it. It is certain the French, who put to sea to fight the Confederates and retake Gibraltar, though they had all the advantages they could desire, yet declined coming to an engagement. And it is no less certain that the Confederates under very great disadvantages sought them out, pursued them four days with a pressed sail, and at length obliged them to fight. The French had all the advantages of being clean, and in good condition, well manned, fresh out of harbour; and could not be ignorant that the Confederates had been above six months from home, were consequently foul and in want of stores; that in so long time, with the service they had performed at Barcelona, and Gibraltar, they must have expended much of their ammunition, as likewise lost some men, as well killed as by sickness; besides leaving a garrison in the latter. They had so good intelligence they could not but be sensible of all this; and what did they put to sea for, but to fight the Confederates? Yet, no sooner did the two fleets discover each other, but the French, instead of attacking them like men full of spirits and fresh for the fight, made use of the cleanness of their ships to their own disgrace, losing the opportunity of attacking the Confederates to advantage, which certainly would have been more so at the first view, than after they had fled before them. The Confederates wisely improved this opportunity to get one half of the garrison of Gibraltar to strengthen the ships' companies which were very deficient, and then, bravely pursuing the flying enemy, may be said to have won the laurel before the battle. And, however<sup>1</sup> one

<sup>1</sup> Although,

pursued and forced to fight may at last behave well ; it is not then courage, but desperation, by rushing upon danger which cannot be avoided, and is the last resort of every coward. This was the case of the French fleet. They came out to fight. They saw, and they fled. It can be supposed by this flight they intended to do as the Confederates suggested<sup>1</sup> they might, and therefore wisely provided against (that is, to slip by in the night and surprise Gibraltar). I grant it possible, but not for them to have done it. They run<sup>2</sup> too fast to stop presently, and too far for that design. And if they durst not do it when swelled with vanity and conquest, how was it more practicable after such a panic? It is most likely that, having run so far and being pursued so close, they began to reflect with resentment upon the dishonour they had brought upon themselves, and the necessity of a battle to wipe off the disgrace. Whereas the Confederates might have avoided the battle, and come off with honour.

The French, having resolved to fight, drew up their line of battle in the best manner ; making themselves strongest in the centre. Contrariwise, the Confederates were, in proportion, strongest in the van, and weaker in the centre ; whereby, though we beat their van, our centre maintained the fight with difficulty. And this was doubtless a great error in the English Admiral (unless he had made a better use of our advantage in the van) for it is well known, and sufficiently proved by this battle, that the whole success in a manner depends upon the strength of the centre. For had the enemy's centre, instead of their van, been beaten, their whole line would have been broken,

<sup>1</sup> Anticipated.

<sup>2</sup> Ran.



and they must have suffered a total defeat ; whereas their centre remaining firm, though their van was broken, they did not in the least suffer by it. For this reason, the French always made a strong centre, and therefore Sir George Rooke should have done the like ; whereas he himself was in the smallest, and worst Second Rate in the English navy, in fact, no better than an 80 gun Third Rate ; for though she had 90 guns, they were no larger than those of a Third Rate. Notwithstanding he might be certain, in case of action, to engage with the best First Rate of France. This may be an instance indeed of courage ; but of great imprudence from the ill effects which might follow to himself and the public service.

The French, to recover their lost honour, fought bravely like men that were angry they had run from us ; but the van were soon beaten into a calmer temper by the discipline of Vice-Admiral Leake, and forced to fly the second time ; whereas, had they stood firm as the centre, the Confederates would have been under great difficulties ; and though they would not have been beaten, yet must have suffered extremely. Their van being beaten gave opportunity to Admiral Shovell to close the line, and by that means supply the places of a few ships, that had retired out of the line for want of shot. However, this reinforcement served only to enable the centre to continue the battle, but did not contribute to render them victorious. Night only put an end to it, when the enemy, having enough of fighting, thought fit to discontinue the battle and tow off. But certainly some better advantages might have been made of our success upon the enemy's van, than closing the line to supply the place of some few ships,

which discovered their weakness too soon ; for afterwards rummaging for shot, many were found.

Vice-Admiral Leake certainly showed very commendable bravery and conduct upon this occasion ; for after having forced the enemy's van, and drawn away the battle from Sir Clowdisley Shovell, he proposed the only means to relieve our centre, and make the Confederates victorious. He was under a necessity in this case to consult Sir Clowdisley, and have his consent, as the superior Admiral who commanded the whole van. But Sir Clowdisley did not comprehend it, and therefore did not approve of it ; so that instead of pushing the enemy's van till he broke their line, or obliged their centre to draw off, which was the shortest way to victory, the battle was lingered out, till night put an end to it.

There is surely some skill in sea as well as land actions ; and in some instances they resemble each other. But if to beat one third of the enemy's line offered no opportunity of advantage, I think there is no such thing. What could the French desire more than to retire where they were weakest, and continue the battle where they were strongest ; to retreat from a disadvantage, and press where they had the advantage ; whilst we acted directly contrary ? Whatever praise has therefore been attributed to Admiral Shovell, for his seamanship (as it is called) in closing the line, it is obvious his incapacity was the loss of a victory. As to the Dutch who formed the whole rear of the line, they merited neither censure nor applause ; for as their strength was pretty near equal to that of the French, so they did not lie under the same disadvantage as the English by the want of shot ; and if the enemy did retire from them, it was

very late, and not long before night parted those in the centre.

Though the Confederates committed some mistakes during the engagement, yet after, as well as before it, their conduct was unexceptionable, and equally brave. The French under favour of the night, and by the help of their galleys, got as far from the Confederates as possible, by their retreat confessing themselves vanquished; and this was positively confirmed the next day, when unluckily the wind favouring them to renew the fight, they refused it, fairly running away as soon as the wind served. On the contrary, the Confederates, naked and unarmed I may say (for such is a man-of-war without shot), politically as well as bravely pursued them, having no resort left, but that brave resolution to board each his ship and die or conquer, sooner than decline the fight. For to fly they had it not in their thoughts. This was as brave a resolution as could be made by men, and rendered their victory complete, serving to convince the enemy we were not to be conquered; and the French, conscious of this truth, left the Confederates masters of the sea, determined (as it proved by events) never to risk the hazard of another general engagement.

In fine, the French lost their honour before the battle, but shewed good conduct in it. The English shewed most conduct before and after the battle, and the most bravery, but the worst conduct, in it; whereby the Confederates lost the reputation they merited, and might have had, of a complete victory; and the French the dishonour they deserved of a total defeat. Nevertheless, upon the whole, this general engagement was as brave as any that had ever been fought between the two nations, and the most glorious



to the Confederates, from whence we may date the downfall of the mighty naval power of France.<sup>1</sup>

It is now time to return to the confederate fleet, which we left the 16th instant in pursuit of the enemy ; but having been advised they had not passed the Straits, they judged, very rightly, that they were gone to Toulon. And thereupon it was determined to proceed to Gibraltar, as well to secure that garrison, as the disabled ships. The same afternoon they had the misfortune to lose the Dutch Admiral's ship, the *Albemarle*, of 64 guns, which was blown up. And the men on board her, except eight, perished. The Admiral had but that morning removed out of her, leaving direction to fill the powder into cartridges, in doing whereof it is supposed this accident happened.

The next morning the Confederate fleet proceeded to Gibraltar, where they arrived the 20th instant ; and a council of war was called to consider of the present circumstances of the fleet and garrison of Gibraltar, and it was resolved that all the marines then in the fleet (except some few on board the *Burford* and *Firme*, who were very weakly manned) should be left at Gibraltar for the defence of that place ; and likewise 60 great guns, as many gunners, and

<sup>1</sup> Although among contemporary literature the reader will look in vain for a discussion of the battle anything like so full as that given here, our author's account should be compared not only with the narratives of Burchett and Lediard, but with those of Byng (*Camden Society*, vol. xlvii, pp. 147-64) and of the Chaplain of the *Ranelagh* (*ibid.*, 196-8). See also *Life of Captain Stephen Martin* (N.R.S., vol. v, pp. 76-80) ; *Monmerqué Memoires du Marquis de Villette* ; *Communay, Le Comte de Toulouse et la bataille de Malaga* ; and the English 'Fighting Instructions' of the hour (N.R.S., vol. xxix, pp. 188-99).

12 carpenters ; and that the seamen employed in getting the guns on shore, or repairing or refitting the damages of any ships to which they did not belong, should be paid for their extra labour two royals per man a day, and that they would likewise leave the *Star* and *Terror* bombs, with their tenders, at Gibraltar, with orders to dispose of their mortars as the Prince of Hesse should direct ; and three months' provisions for 2000 men. And in respect to the fleet, it was resolved that all such ships as were in a condition for the winter service should be left abroad under the command of Sir John Leake ; those, that were not in a condition to proceed for England, to go to Lisbon, to be refitted ; but those that were in a condition, to proceed to England directly ; and that the whole fleet should sail from Gibraltar the first opportunity of wind.

This disposition being made of the fleet, Sir John Leake left the *Prince George*, as not being in a condition to remain abroad, with directions to Captain Martin her commander, as soon as refitted, to return to him by the first opportunity, and hoisted his flag on board the *Nottingham*, a Fourth Rate of 60 guns, in order to proceed to Lisbon, according to instructions he received from Sir George Rooke, pursuant to the resolution of the council of war.

By these Instructions, he was required to take under his command the squadron left in the Mediterranean,<sup>1</sup> consisting of two Third Rates, ten Fourth Rates, three Fifth, one Sixth, and a

<sup>1</sup> *Swiftsure*, *Yarmouth*, *Assurance*, Third Rates of 70 guns each ; *Nottingham* and *Monk* of 60 each ; *Centurion*, *Swallow*, *Antelope*, *Leopard*, *Tiger* and *Panther*, of 50 each ; *Lark*, *Garland* and *Roebuck*, of 40 each ; and *Tartar*, of 32. One Sixth, the *Newport*, and the *Vulture* fireship.

fireship,<sup>1</sup> together with such ships of the States General as should be ordered to join him for the winter service ; and to make the best of his way to Lisbon ; from whence he was to detach the merchant ships to England, under a convoy of four sail, viz., the Yarmouth, Swiftsure, Assurance, and Monk, as soon as they were refitted. He was to use his utmost endeavour to annoy the enemy, and guard the coast of Portugal and Spain, giving all due protection to the ships of Her Majesty's subjects and her allies. Particularly, he was to take care of Gibraltar, keeping always some clean frigates to cruise off that place, to discover the enemy's ships ; and to order them to assist the Prince of Hesse ; and if the garrison of Gibraltar should not be relieved by the King of Portugal (to which he was to assist) before the three months' provisions that were left there should be expended, he was to supply them as much as he could out of the provisions of Her Majesty that should then be at Lisbon. He was likewise to send a convoy of one or two ships with any merchant ships bound from Lisbon to Ireland ; and, as soon as the garrison of Gibraltar was relieved, he was to take as many of the marines as would man his ships to their highest complement, and to send the rest with their officers to England. He was likewise to deliver a chest of money, and seventy barrels of powder, to the Alcalde of Alcazar<sup>2</sup> for the redemption of thirty French Protestant captives.

The 25th, the whole fleet sailed from Gibraltar. The next day a council of war was held, in

<sup>1</sup> This specification differs from the list of the squadron as finally composed and given in the previous note ; viz., three Third Rates, eight Fourth Rates, four Fifth Rates, one Sixth Rate, and a fireship.

<sup>2</sup> Kasr-es-Seghir.



relation to a Leghorn ship, called *Nuestra Señora de Buena Hora*, which was laden with French effects, and it was agreed by the Admirals, she should be carried to England, in order to be condemned as prize. It was likewise agreed that the rendez-vous of the ships bound to England should be Spithead; and those with Sir John Leake, at Lisbon. The last of August Sir John Leake parted from Sir George Rooke, proceeding for Lisbon, having with him the *Yarmouth*, *Swiftsure*, *Assurance*, *Monk*, *Panther*, *Tartar*, and *Firebrand* fireship, and four victuallers. The 4th of September the *Swallow* and *Centurion* joined him; and having ordered the former, with the fireship, to come after him to Lisbon with the merchant-ships, he left them ten leagues on this side the Southern Cape,<sup>1</sup> making the best of his way before with the rest; and the 9th in the afternoon arrived at Lisbon, where he found the *Leopard*, *Antelope*, and *Roebuck*, unrigged and preparing to careen.

<sup>1</sup> St. Vincent.

## CHAPTER VI <sup>1</sup>

*Vice-Admiral Leake's proceedings at Lisbon after the departure of the Grand Fleet for England. Gibraltar is besieged. He relieves it, and destroys some of the enemy's ships.*

THE taking of Gibraltar, a place of the greatest importance both by reason of its natural and artificial strength, but much more so by its advantageous situation for the protection or annoyance of trade, was a great encouragement to the partisans of the House of Austria. Besides, the confederate garrison in that place was so dangerous a thorn in the sides of the Spaniards, and such a proof of the advantage the allies had gained by sea over the French fleet, that the Courts of Versailles and Madrid resolved to wrest that place out of our hands. To which purpose the Marquis de Villadarias was detached with 8000 men to retake it, and the Count de Toulouse with the fleet of France was sent by the French King to assist the Marquis in the execution thereof by sea. But the Count being happily prevented by the battle of Malaga, and obliged to retire with precipitation to Toulon to repair their shattered fleet, it entirely put a stop to the Marquis's proceedings by land. Nevertheless the confederate fleet were no sooner gone for England, and Sir

<sup>1</sup> The period covered by this chapter is the autumn of 1704.

John Leake with his squadron necessitated to repair to Lisbon, than they conceived they had an opportunity to surprise the place, before they could receive any relief; well knowing the weakness of the fortifications to the land side, which made the place hardly tenable against a regular attack, any long time, especially if they should be distressed at the same time by a squadron in the bay. Nor indeed could they have wished for a more favourable opportunity; for what with the want of stores, provisions, and the reparations of Admiral Leake's squadron, absolutely necessary to make good the damages received in the late battle, it was impossible he could be able to get to sea in a short time.

Vice-Admiral Leake (as I observed in the conclusion of the last chapter) having left four sail and a fireship with the victuallers to come after him, made the best of his way before them in the Nottingham with four sail more, and the 9th of September arrived at Lisbon, where he found the Leopard, Antelope, and Roebuck, unrigged and preparing to careen. The Nottingham, he found, must have all her lower masts shifted, and the Panther and Centurion some of theirs, besides other damages received in the late engagement; which would take up at least a month's time to get ready for service. To add to these difficulties, he received a letter the 9th instant from the English Ambassador (Mr. Methuen) at that Court, acquainting him that there were at Lagos 1500 men, which, by the King of Portugal's order, waited to be transported from that place to Gibraltar, but he (it seems) was to provide everything for their accommodation; though by his Instructions he had no particular directions relating to this matter;



neither had any care been taken for transport ships to carry them thither, nor provision to subsist upon when they were there ; so that they entirely depended upon his ships for transportation, and expected to be supplied with provisions out of Her Majesty's stores, of which there were of all sorts so small a quantity for his own use, that he was under the necessity of writing a very pressing letter to England for a speedy supply. In this letter he represented that all sorts of stores were likewise wanting, especially Gunner's stores of all kinds ; that those ships with him, that had been in the late engagement, had not 25 rounds of shot, and not 10 of cartridges ; that the latter (if possible) he would procure at Lisbon, but the rest he desired might be sent with all expedition. He likewise desired they would send a Master-Attendant, and Master-Shipwright, of which he was in extreme want. But well knowing how little the proper officers, to whom the care of these things belonged at home, considered the exigency of affairs abroad, he wrote to Sir George Rooke, as a friend, and one fully sensible of the necessity he was under of what he applied for, to use his endeavours and interest to procure them ; 'for to fit out a squadron,' says he, 'and expect they should perform as they ought to, under these insuperable difficulties, is to make brick without straw ; no stores being to be had from the Portuguese, but in small quantities and with much solicitation.'

In the meantime he applied himself to see the necessary repairs of his squadron carried on in the best manner the present circumstances would admit. For this end, the 11th of September he shifted his flag from the Nottingham to the Swallow, that the former might begin to be

refitted. Two days after, in the evening, the Duke of Schomberg paid him a visit on board, and at his going off was saluted with eleven guns; and great rejoicings were made at Lisbon by illuminations and fireworks, as well as by the ships in the harbour, for the success of Her Majesty's fleet against the French and Spaniards. The 16th the Tartar sailed, the Admiral having ordered her to cruise off Oporto; and the same day the Yarmouth, Swiftsure, Monk, Assurance, and Vulture fireship arrived with the victuallers, which Sir John in his passage to Lisbon had left to follow him. The next day he removed his flag from the Swallow to the Yarmouth.

This was the situation of affairs at Lisbon; when, the 19th, the Tiger arrived there, bringing Sir John an account that a squadron of the enemy's ships were seen off of Gibraltar. He also received from the Ambassador two different accounts that had been sent him; one from Algarve, importing that two Dutch privateers came by Gibraltar (two days before the Tiger left that place) and saw thirteen sail of ships standing over to Ceuta, but none at an anchor in the Bay of Gibraltar. The other account was from the Lord Galway, that His Lordship had advice from the enemy's camp that Count Toulouse with the whole French fleet was besieging Gibraltar. Upon these confused and uncertain accounts, Sir John, to gain more certain intelligence, detached the Tiger and Antelope to Tangier, to observe the enemy's motions; and at the same time put on board them three months' provisions for the garrison of Gibraltar, that, if any opportunity should offer, they might throw them into that place. He likewise ordered the aforementioned ships, that upon any further intelli-

gence, the Tiger should return with the account to him at Lisbon, and the other remain cruising off Cape Spartel, to watch the enemy more narrowly. The 22nd, the Tartar (which sailed the 16th to cruise off of Oporto) returned, having sprung the head of her mainmast ; and the 29th the Leopard sailed, being detached by the Admiral to cruise between Oporto and the Burlings. The next day the Garland arrived from Sallee.

All this time Sir John was making his utmost efforts to get his squadron in a condition for the sea, engaging his own credit to procure stores to effect it. For all the persuasions that the Ambassador and himself could use with the Portuguese had only obtained 100 barrels of powder. So much they esteemed our alliance ! And this Sir John thought so great a disappointment, that he dispatched a packet on purpose to England with an account of it ; acquainting the Lords of His Royal Highness's Council of the vigorous proceedings of the enemy, with the difficulties and fatigues he lay under for want of the necessary stores of all kinds, which he was obliged to procure, at *any* rate, upon his own account ; and all too little for the reparation of his squadron : pressing them therefore to send a speedy supply. That he did not know what credit might be given to the accounts from Gibraltar ; but apprehended, if they should attempt the reduction of it, and not succeed before the season of the year obliged them to retire, they would leave a superior strength to the squadron with him,<sup>1</sup> to endeavour the intercepting any supply from Lisbon. This letter was dated the 26th of September. The next

<sup>1</sup> They would leave a squadron superior in strength to his own.



day he shifted his flag from the Yarmouth to the Centurion. In the meantime affairs grew worse at Gibraltar ; for the 1st of October, he received certain advice of that place's being invested by a letter from His Highness the Prince of Hesse Darmstadt, Governor of Gibraltar, dated the 23rd of September, being brought by the Prince's felucca to Lagos, and thence dispatched over land to Lisbon ; which letter was as follows :

SIR,—I dispatch this express, to give His Catholic Majesty, and you, notice of a squadron of French ships which came this evening into this bay, the number of which are 19 great and small, and of the Line of Battle, as you will find by the opinion of the sea-officers here enclosed. Also by an account we had this morning of a Genoese Tartan, and by the provisions which have been made by the Marquis de Villadarias who commands the Spanish camp, their design is to besiege us by sea and land ; having on board 3000 men to put on shore, and the rest proportionable to that attempt. Therefore I desire the favour of you to take it into your consideration, and to make all the speed you can, and as you shall judge most proper for the public service, and the relief of the place. I need not tell you how far our provisions may last us, the account being easily made by the list I gave Sir George Rooke at our parting ; and Mr. Abraham Knox, who is appointed here to victual the garrison, being in want of a sum of money, to pay the soldiers their short-allowance of butter and cheese. I therefore hope you will make the more haste, that we may receive a supply accordingly. And I shall rejoice to see you here, that it may redound to your satisfaction and glory, as well as the public concern, to meet with such a squadron of ships which they say are likewise designed for the West Indies, after this enterprise succeeds and is over, as they hope ; so that by this happy stroke, you will gain a great and double advantage ; in destroying the enemy, and relieving the garrison. I refer all to your prudent care and directions, remaining with sincerity, &c.

GEORGE, PRINCE OF HESSE.

Upon this emergency, Sir John found it absolutely necessary to detain the four ships, which by Sir George Rooke's orders, were to be dispatched with the trade to England, and therefore he resolved to do it. But considering the circumstances he was under, he thought it prudential to make it the act of the Court of Portugal. For that purpose he represented it in such a light, that the 1st of October he received a letter from Roque Montero, the principal Secretary of State, protesting against the departure of the four ships: upon which he summoned a council of war the same day, to consider what might be done for the relief of Gibraltar, and in relation to the protest of the Portugal Minister. The council of war having therefore considered the condition of Gibraltar, and that the squadron with Sir John would be too weak to attempt the relief of that place, it was resolved to detain the four ships, till they received further advice of the enemy's proceedings,<sup>1</sup> and that the Tartar should be dispatched for England with an express to hasten thither an additional force to enable them to relieve it.

These resolutions Sir John immediately put in execution, sending to the Portugal Secretary of State, in answer to his letter, the resolution they had taken in the council of war; and likewise, that he was informed by an express from Gibraltar, that the place might hold out two months, but not longer. The 3rd, he shifted his flag from the Centurion to the Yarmouth. The same day the packet came in from England, bringing him His Royal Highness's orders; that when the Pembroke and Canterbury should arrive at Lisbon,

<sup>1</sup> Which was approved of in an order from His Royal Highness, dated October 24.—*Author's Note.*

he might detain them two, and in their stead, return to England two of the ships then with him that were in the worst condition, and directing him to convoy, or cause to be convoyed to Gibraltar four months' provisions for 2000 men, out of the provisions that were then coming under convoy of the ships before-mentioned. Accompanying these orders, was a letter from His Highness's secretary, Mr. Clarke, acquainting him that Sir George Rooke had spoke to the Prince about his want of naval stores, upon which His Highness directed the Navy Board to send him 100 coil of rope, if possible, &c., as many sails for Fourth and Fifth Rates, as could be got ready to go with that convoy ; and that he hoped in a little time he would have a supply from the ordnance.

The next day came in the *Antelope*, with a Spanish prize from Cadiz laden with wine and brandy for the West Indies, and having a considerable number of packets of letters on board. Sir John sent them to the English Ambassador. The *Antelope* lost company with the *Tiger* off of Cape St. Vincent, and afterwards met with an English ship from Leghorn, which gave an account that he saw a squadron of the enemy's ships in Gibraltar ; upon which he came directly for Lisbon with the advice. Soon after the *Lark*, Captain Fotherby, arrived, who immediately sent a letter to the Admiral to acquaint him of the condition he left Gibraltar in, and his escape from thence ; by whom he likewise received a letter from the Prince of Hesse, acquainting him that since his last the enemy had landed some regiments, and seemed to continue in their designs of attacking that place and, by what he could judge, the number might amount in all, that lay there encamped, to near 7000, and that the



number of ships were increased by four more, one of 94 guns, and the other three of 50 and 60. The 7th the Tiger arrived with two French prizes from Newfoundland, which he took off of the Southward cape. And Sir John having ordered the Antelope and Roebuck, to cruise off of Cape Spartel for thirty days to gain intelligence and observe the enemy's motions, by the former he sent the following to the Prince of Hesse.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR HIGHNESS,—I am making all possible dispatch to get the ships of my squadron ready for service, and have detained four ships which were under orders for England to strengthen me, so that when the convoy arrives from England, which is expected every minute, I hope to be in a condition to see your Highness at Gibraltar. But if I should be so unfortunate as not to be in a condition, before the garrison is straitened for provisions, I will find some way to push in a ship in the night with provisions; and in order thereunto am loading one, which sails very well, so that if the guard upon the New Mole should discover, in the night, a ship approaching that place, with four lights placed where they may be best seen, they may be sure they are friends. This I thought fit to advise your Highness of, if things should come to extremity.

In the meantime, the prisoners brought in by the Tiger and Antelope growing very sickly, and beginning to infect the ships' companies, Sir John thought it by no means advisable to continue them any longer on board, and therefore applied himself to our Ambassador, desiring him to come to some speedy resolution how to dispose of them; for otherwise he must be obliged to set them at liberty. But after some time passed, and his Excellency not having taken any measures therein, the infection, which at first

appeared, beginning to spread, he set a great part of them at liberty, and by that means preserved the healths of many of his ships' companies, amongst whom they were dispersed. The Ambassador, though apprised of the circumstances of this affair and the consequences that must follow if himself took no care of it, was pleased, however, not only to find fault with, but to be angry at it. But Admiral Leake returned him this answer, that he should never consent to make Her Majesty's ships gaols, to the prejudice of the healths of his own men; that his Excellency had been misinformed as to the number released; for all the Masters were detained, and 40 of the healthiest of them took by the *Tiger*, and all those taken by the *Antelope*; so that if the French merchants could propose any way with safety to exchange prisoners from Cadiz, he presumed they had enough for that purpose. As this affair of the prisoners could not have been the occasion of any difference betwixt his Excellency and Sir John, it is obvious that there had been something previous, which had disgusted him, and I take it to have been this.

At the beginning of the campaign we may remember, when Sir George Rooke sailed from Lisbon with the bulk of the fleet upon a cruise, Sir John was left there with the rest with orders to unlade the stores from the hulk and transport ships, which he had lately brought from England, and to careen and refit the men-of-war as soon as that was done. But before this could be done there was a necessity to have a store-house on shore to put the stores in out of the transports and hulk. Sir John used his utmost interest and application to the Ambassador, but could not

obtain one, whereby he could neither dispatch the transports to England, nor have the use of the hulk to careen the ships ; neither could he procure a hulk from the Portuguese, till his own was unloaded, notwithstanding they had two to spare ; both which the Dutch procured, though we could get neither ; so that whilst they had everything they wanted from the Portuguese, the English were obliged to make the best shift they could. This neglect was so obvious, that Sir John could not help, in his own justification, to observe, both to his Excellency and Sir George Rooke, *that if our affairs had been as well conducted as the Dutch we should have been as well served.* It is likewise certain, his Excellency assumed too much to himself in the affairs of the fleet ; as if the Admirals had been subordinate to him, expecting to be consulted, even in matters wherein he could not be a competent judge, and where the necessary dispatch of things would not admit of it ; and this being not always done, he might conceive there was not that deference paid to his character there ought to have been. Besides, at this time, by pressing on the refitting the squadron with the dispatch the exigency of affairs required, it evidently appeared the English Ambassador was not in any degree so active on our part for the English fleet, or had that influence with the Court of Portugal, as the Dutch Minister on the behalf of the Dutch ; whereby they had everything preferable to us. It was not then to be wondered at, if the English Admiral, whose conduct and reputation depended upon it, was so urgent, and should complain under such disadvantages and disappointments ; especially as we were the principal ally, and bore so much the greater share of the burthen and expense of



the war. And as Sir John acted openly and zealously for the good of the common cause himself, he thought all others, in their respective stations, should do the like, as their duty ; and not require to be solicited to do it as a favour ; and when he observed any neglect or delays in any person, he always took proper notice of it, without respect of persons. For however he might miscarry, by means of other neglects, the disreputation of not succeeding would fall upon him. From hence seems to have sprung that disagreement which his Excellency at this time was forward to show upon every occasion, cavilling upon every trifling matter. Another instance of which happened likewise about this time, when, by his letter to Sir John, he acquainted him that there was some dissatisfaction among the Dutch relating to our ships ; but leaving him to find out what it was. This gave him some uneasiness, not being sensible of any occasion he had given, from whence it might arise ; neither could he discover it by consulting the Dutch captains ; till at length they, by the Dutch Minister, learned that if there was any dissatisfaction, it was in relation to one of our ships, which was absent upon some service, and which, it was suggested, he stayed for to join him before he proceeded to Gibraltar. As soon as Sir John was informed of this, he returned our Ambassador answer that he was something surprised at their proceedings, when not only one of ours but one of their ships was absent ; but that as soon as the Dutch were ready to join him, and the Panther was ready, he would, as well for his own justification as for the interest of his country, proceed without a moment's loss of time to the relief of Gibraltar. By this it appears, the matter was mere pique

and resentment, and the occasion only made use of to perplex. If there was really any dissatisfaction amongst the Dutch, it was because he was too expeditious for them ; whereby, upon all occasions, the delays appeared to be wholly theirs ; for they never were ready to sail so soon as the English. It was a very difficult and uneasy situation Admiral Leake was in, to act pursuant to his Instructions, and at the same time agreeable to the Dutch, the Court of Portugal, and His Catholic Majesty ; when almost every proceeding must clash with one or other of them, but more especially when our own Minister, who should have studied to make all things easy, acted quite contrary. This misunderstanding was, doubtless, of the last consequence, as tending to disconcert all his measures for the public service. It was hardly to be guarded against, and the more vexatious, as he knew he had given no just grounds for it. All that he could do in this case, was to persevere in well-doing. He did so, and his very enemies were forced to acknowledge his virtue and merit.

The 19th of October, a Dutch Rear-Admiral with five sail of men-of-war, and 22 sail of merchant ships and transports arrived at Lisbon, and soon after another fleet, which proved to be the Pembroke, Gloucester and Canterbury, with the long-wished-for supplies.

By this time the ships intended to go with him being ready for sea, except the Panther and Newport which would be finished in five or six days, Sir John pressed the Agent-Victualler to use the utmost dispatch in sending the provisions on board the respective ships, to complete them to three months. Whilst this was doing, he received a letter from His Highness the Prince of

Hesse, the 21st instant, in the evening, acquainting him with the condition of Gibraltar: that the French squadron were gone to the westward, consisting of 16 sail of men-of-war, leaving six frigates behind them; that the army opened the trenches the 10th from the farthest mills, and had advanced only a line of communication to cover the sand-hill, where he expected they would raise their first battery; but that last night they worked and advanced one hundred paces nearer. Notwithstanding which, they obliged them to go on but very slowly, by means of their mortars and cannon; having brought upon the top of the hill three 12-pounders, with some long three-pounders, all brass, which overlooked them; that he was in no manner of concern, only that they had not powder for a lasting siege and their provisions short.

Upon the receipt of his letter, Sir John held a council of war the next morning; wherein it was resolved, that if they should not be provided with powder for the use of the garrison by Tuesday next (that day being Sunday), then they would proceed, notwithstanding, without a moment's loss of time, with such of Her Majesty's ships and the States General's as were ready to sail to their relief. And in the meantime to encourage the garrison, Sir John sent to His Highness to acquaint him that he had now got 23 sail of English and Dutch, with six months' provisions for the garrison, and that he should sail in four or five days at farthest; so that he hoped to kiss His Highness's hands very shortly, and remove his troublesome neighbours: and as the powder for the garrison was the only thing wanting, he likewise wrote to the Ambassador, desiring him to make his utmost application for it; *that*



*being the only thing they stayed for, and which it was not in his power to procure from the Portuguese :* but that if it was not procured and brought on board by Tuesday he must be obliged to go without it, according to the result of the council of war for sailing on that day ; of which council he enclosed him a copy. Upon this occasion he had an opportunity to show his Excellency that the delays proceeded wholly from himself and the Dutch.

According to the resolution that had been taken for sailing, Sir John gave out the rendez-vous to the squadron ; that in case of separation before they got the length of Cape Spartel, to call in at Tangier ; and if they did not find him there, nor any order, the place of rendez-vous to be Gibraltar. But when on Tuesday the 24th, the day for sailing, Sir John made the signal in the morning early to unmoor in order to sail in the afternoon, the Dutch Admiral, though he had agreed in council to be ready by that time, sent two of his captains to acquaint him that two Dutch men-of-war were putting on shore their extra provisions, and that if he sailed, they must be left behind. This stopped his proceeding that day ; but the next morning early he sailed with the fleet under his command, consisting of 19 sail, 13 whereof were English, and six Dutch ; with four sail of victuallers, to whom he gave orders that, in case he should meet with and engage the enemy on this side of Gibraltar *with the wind westerly*, they should take the first opportunity they could, whilst the fleet was engaged, to pass by them and make the best of their way into the New Mole at Gibraltar ; and if he should engage in that bay, to do the same : but if he engaged them on this side of Gibraltar *with the wind easterly*

so that there should be no possibility of getting thither, they were to lie to leeward of the fleet.

The 29th, in the morning, as soon as Sir John made the land of Cape Spartel, he caused the colours to be struck, that he might not be discovered and at the same time ordered all the light frigates in the squadron, and some of the cleanest ships, to make the best of their way before him into the mouth of the Bay of Gibraltar, in order to prevent any of the enemy's ships that might be there from getting out, and to intercept them if they were weaker ; but if they should appear to be too strong, to lie by, till himself with the rest of the fleet should join them.<sup>1</sup>

In the afternoon the Swallow gave chase to a French man-of-war that stood out of the Bay ; and soon after Sir John stood into it, where he found two French men-of-war of 36 guns each, a frigate of 16 guns, a fireship of 24 guns, a store-ketch laden with powder and shells ; two English prizes and a Tartan ; besides many other smaller vessels, as Barcalongas, &c. All which above-mentioned, seeing Sir John coming into the Bay, the French immediately run ashore and burnt. There was likewise the Estola or Star, a French frigate of 30 guns, which got out of the bay ; but being chased (as was said before) by the Swallow, was taken and brought in soon after, so that not one of them escaped : and Sir John having advice of two more ships that were at Tetuan, detached the Canterbury, Leopard, Garland and Lark in quest of them.

The besieged expressed an extraordinary joy upon Sir John's arrival ; for besides the assistance, they might expect from him, by supplies of stores,

<sup>1</sup> ' Him,' author's copy.

ammunition and provisions, they had now nothing to fear from the sea side, and might turn all their thoughts to defend themselves to the land. And indeed he arrived so opportunely, that two days would in all probability have sunk them beyond hope. For the enemy, by the help of rope-ladders, found means to climb up the rocks and get upon the mountain, through a way that was thought inaccessible, to the number of 500 Spaniards, where they had remained several days. At the same time they had got together a great number of boats from Cadiz and other parts, to land 3000 men at the New Mole; so that by making a vigorous assault on the sea side, they must have drawn the whole garrison to defend that attack; whilst in the meantime, the 500 concealed men were to have rushed into the town. And this could hardly have failed of success, there being at that time (as was discovered some days afterwards) a plot for delivering up the place. But this was happily prevented by Sir John's seasonable arrival; for the men upon the hill, now despairing of success, had nothing but the frightful idea of starving, or falling into their enemy's hands; which they had bound themselves by an oath not to do, as long as any one was left. Nevertheless, hunger drawing them out of their ambuscade, they were discovered the day after Sir John's arrival, and a consultation being held thereupon, he detached out of the fleet 500 marines and seamen to assist the garrison, whilst Colonel Borr,<sup>1</sup> with 500 men, marched out of the town, and attacked them with such vigour, that, notwithstanding their oath, 190 common soldiers, with a Colonel, Lieutenant-

<sup>1</sup> 'Burr,' author's spelling.



Colonel, Major, and 30 Captains, Lieutenants and Ensigns, were glad to take quarter. The remaining part more desperate, to the number of 200, were killed on the spot ; the rest, who endeavoured to make their retreat by the same way they came, fell down headlong from the rocks ; so that it was believed few, if any, returned to the camp.

The next day Sir John sent a flag of truce to the Marquis de Villadarias and the Baron de Pointis to treat about the exchange of prisoners ; and the day following he received a letter from His Highness the Prince of Hesse. 'I cannot express,' says he, 'the satisfaction of your appearance so opportunely before this place with the squadron of ships under your command, having been the entire reason of saving it from the attempt of the enemy, who were to attack us that very night of your entrance in many places at once, with a great number of men ; which with our small garrison had not been able to have held out against such a superior force.'

By this letter, the relief appears to have been so seasonable and fortunate, that the delay of one day, or even a few hours, might have put the place into the enemy's hands : and therefore may well be esteemed one of those signal instances of Providence, which as Mr. Boyer<sup>1</sup> observes, was ever conspicuous in Sir John Leake's expeditions. And if we consider this expedition from beginning to end, the happy measures whereby it was conducted, and the difficulties almost insuperable it was attended with, it will appear much more glorious to him. For in the first place, how insufficient was the

<sup>1</sup> *Life and Reign of Queen Anne*, p. 240.

squadron left abroad with Sir John, for the winter guard, to perform the services required of him ! He was to annoy the enemy, guard the coasts of Portugal and Spain, protect the trade, and take care of Gibraltar ; to send four sail with the merchant ships to England, and one or two with the trade to Ireland ; and to enable him to do all this, he was appointed two Third Rates, and ten Fourth Rates, with a fireship and some frigates ; but when he had joined all the ships in those parts at Lisbon, he could make only three Third Rates of 70 guns each, two Fourth Rates of 60 guns each, and six others of 50 guns each ; whereof the three Third Rates and one Fourth of 60 guns were under express orders to be the four ships to convoy the trade to England, as soon as they were ready ; which being done, there remained only one ship of 60 guns to bear his flag, and six others of 50 guns, with four frigates and a fireship ; a notable squadron to perform such services, had they been well manned and in good condition. But on the contrary, all of them (except two of 50 guns) had been shattered in the late engagement, and wanted great reparation ; besides stores, ammunition and men ; and indeed every thing that was necessary : no supplies to be presently expected from England, and little, or next to none from the Portuguese, as an ally ; but only what Sir John could procure at *any* rate, upon his own credit ; no assistance from the English Ambassador ; the Court of Portugal dissatisfied ; the King of Spain, and all England impatient for the relief of Gibraltar by his conduct ; though all the means were wanting to perform it ; and the enemy's fleet superior, not only to the strength he had with him, but beyond what he might expect to have from England, to

give timely assistance. In this exigency, he used all the means the best conduct could apply. The difficulty of refitting his squadron without materials and without assistance he overcame by his unwearied application, and by his own credit. The want of a reinforcement and supplies from England, to enable him to proceed, which was not in his own power, he however, by detaining the four ships and by his repeated applications to the Lord High Admiral's Council, and the assistance of his particular friends at home, procured in time, both for his squadron and Gibraltar. In the meantime he kept up the spirits of the garrison by a constant expectation of him, and by a regular correspondence, notwithstanding the utmost precautions of the enemy's ships in the bay to prevent it. By his cruisers he gained the best intelligence, and narrowly watched the enemy's motions; took several of the enemy's ships and protected the trade of the allies. All this he did, and all these difficulties he overcame, by his diligence and steadfast perseverance for the common good; and no sooner had he received the supplies, with the reinforcement of six Dutch and three English, but he was impatient to seek the enemy, though he might well expect they were superior; the French squadron, by the last accounts, consisting of 22 sail; and many of them larger ships than those with him. But here he was stopped some days for powder for the garrison; and after that, one day by the heavy Dutchman;<sup>1</sup> whom, nevertheless, by his example he quickened; so that had he acted by himself, Gibraltar would have been relieved some days before. But these delays

<sup>1</sup> ? Dutchmen; *vide supra*, p. 199.



served to make the relief so much the more extraordinary and fortunate by his arrival to save them at so critical a juncture. The whole then of this enterprise being considered, it will appear to have been one of the hardest and most difficult services, as well as the best conducted and most fortunate of any naval expedition that happened during the war. How (after this) Gibraltar sustained a long and bloody siege under the command of the Prince of Hesse, Governor thereof, by the assistance of the fleet, will be the subject of the following chapter.

## CHAPTER VII<sup>1</sup>

*The siege of Gibraltar, continued ; with the brave defence of the besieged by the assistance of the fleet under the command of Sir John Leake ; and proceedings till his return to Lisbon.*

THE garrison of Gibraltar, having been so fortunately relieved (as has been related in the preceding chapter), had their wants supplied, and were at once freed from all apprehensions of the enemy by land ; and instead of French ships in the bay, to molest them and shut them up, had now the sea open ; and not only the countenance and protection of the Confederate squadron on that side, but their assistance by land to carry on the siege. This benefit they received from our fleet immediately upon their arrival by a detachment of 500 seamen, to enable the garrison to attack the Spaniards upon the hill ; and all the enemy's designs to carry the place by assault and treachery were rendered abortive by the seasonable arrival of the fleet. Nevertheless, they still carried on the siege with the utmost vigour, and even with assured hopes of success ; the fortifications being thought very insufficient to sustain a long siege against the regular attacks of such an army as then invested it ; and which,

<sup>1</sup> The period covered by this chapter comprises the months of November and December, 1704.

indeed, without the aid of the fleet had been altogether impossible.

It was therefore to be considered what was now to be done by the mutual assistance of the fleet and garrison to defend the place. His Highness the Prince of Hesse, their brave Governor, observing how much the garrison was animated by the presence of the fleet and the advantages they had already gained by their assistance, proposed to Sir John that since the garrison had the good success of yesterday (in defeating the 500 Spaniards upon the hill), he was considering whether it might not be proper, with the conjunction of his squadron, to attempt something upon the enemy's batteries. Wherefore he took the liberty to lay before him his opinion in that case; leaving it to his best consideration [ ]<sup>1</sup> to make a sally, which could not be with less than 800 men; and their garrison being but 1300, in good health. The question was, if they should venture it, or stay till they had an assurance of having a competent number of men from the reinforcement coming from England; which difficulties he judged, could not be easily decided, but must be regulated by the time and the enemy's proceedings. So [ ]<sup>2</sup> proposed to him to send with the first fair wind an express to Faro, to represent to the King and the Ministers of the Allies the condition of the place; and that without two or three thousand men to reinforce the garrison, which were diminishing every day, they should be exposed to ill consequences: for that all the prisoners reported, Spain and France were resolved either to lose all, or to take that place; and therefore the forces, which had served against Portugal, should

<sup>1</sup> Whether.

<sup>2</sup> He.



be ordered before Gibraltar. The answer of which express, continues the Prince, 'would tarry the utmost but ten or twelve days, and then we can afterwards take the measures accordingly ; and if you could spare us the Marines on board the several ships which came from England, it would be of great assistance to our weak garrison.'

This proposal Sir John did not by any means approve of, as to that part which related to the sally, because the garrison being so weak, the least miscarriage might be the loss of the place. Besides, he was not able to supply them with the number of seamen they desired to reinforce the garrison upon that occasion ; his squadron being manned only to the lowest complement. But he readily concurred with the Prince in every other particular proposed.

In the afternoon he new berthed his squadron, placing them in a line of battle, and ordered the Swallow Prize to cannonade the enemy's battery that was nearest the town. But the enemy having brought their guns to bear upon her, she was obliged to come away again. The next morning, being the 2nd of November, he received a letter from the Prince, desiring, as the garrison was very much fatigued and weak, that he would take the New Mole, and all the posts from without the walls of the town towards Europa Point, and provide and guard them with seamen—which would be an extraordinary relief to them ; and likewise, as he designed to mount some more guns upon the top of the hill where they had performed so much service, that he would order some boatswains and a competent number of men and their tackle, to parbuckle<sup>1</sup> them upon

<sup>1</sup> ' Pair-buckle,' author's spelling.

the hill ; and also some men to work in the night, to repair what should be beaten down by the enemy's guns, when they began to play their great battery. This letter, with the former of the 1st instant, he thought fit to be considered at a council of war ; and it was resolved to detach 250 men out of the fleet on shore to the garrison of Gibraltar, to guard the New Mole, and perform such other services as His Highness the Prince of Hesse should think fit to employ them in. But it was not thought safe at that season of the year to comply with a proposal of His Highness for sending two frigates to the east side of the enemy's camp to cannonade their batteries, and then to try with boats and men to burn it and nail their guns ; or to co-operate with the garrison in making a sally ; for, the fleet being but ill-manned, if they should miscarry, it would expose them to dangerous consequences. In the meantime the Leopard arrived in the bay, and the next morning the Canterbury, Lark and Garland, which four ships had been detached to Tetuan in quest of two of the enemy's. The last of these Sir John dispatched directly with an express to Lagos, in order to be forwarded from thence to Lisbon to the English Ambassador there, to acquaint His Majesty of Portugal of his proceedings and the wretched condition of Gibraltar ; telling him that he was afraid all his endeavours to preserve that place would be unsuccessful ; and it was his opinion, if he should leave them, they would be obliged to surrender ; and therefore he must stay to give them all the assistance that possibly he could. And to the same effect in his letter to England. After having given an account of his destroying the French ships there, 'but I doubt,'

says he, 'the garrison will not have the same success in the defence of the town ; for I find, that it is not provisions and powder they want (of the former of which I have brought them for seven months, and of the latter 200 barrels), but officers and men ; with which unless they are speedily reinforced, I cannot see, notwithstanding all the assistance I can give them, how they can hold it : for the wall is only a heap of sand, cased with slight thin stone, and by reason thereof, most of their guns are disabled, and the gunners are not able to stand by the rest : the enemy numerous, are advanced pretty near the town, and have raised two very strong batteries against it ; and will in a very few days, level the only bastion that's left. The consideration whereof will oblige me to stay longer than otherwise I designed.'

This letter gives us a short, but clear account of the condition of Gibraltar ; and the resolution Sir John had made within himself to support them to the utmost. And indeed every day showed more and more how much they stood in need of his assistance ; and confirmed how impossible it would have been to defend the place, had he abandoned them. The enemy, continuing their approaches, began to fire furiously from their new battery of fourteen pieces of cannon ; so that with their former batteries, they continually played with 30 pieces of cannon, besides mortars ; whereby they had ruined a great part of the wall and bastion, and dismounted above 40 cannon of the besieged. This occasioned His Highness, by his letter of the 5th instant, to acquaint Sir John thereof ; and that having in company with Captain Bennet, Chief Engineer, been to view the works of the enemy and likewise our fortifica-



tions to consider of the most proper place to work upon for their defence, Mr. Bennet thought fit that they should fill with all speed the houses behind the curtain. But that requiring a great number of men, he desired Sir John to take it into consideration, if every day he could not send 500 men on shore to perform that service, which every night might be taken off again to their respective ships. Whereupon it was resolved that every part of the said proposal should be complied with but the number of men therein required, of which they could spare no more than 300. And accordingly so many were every day landed, and employed in demolishing some houses and carrying the stone over against a curtain, that came from the covered way to the gate; which the engineer designed to make as strong as possible, and plant several pieces of cannon thereon, and it was hoped would be finished in eight days.

The 7th, Sir John received advice by the Master of a merchant ship, that the 3rd instant in the morning, he, being within two leagues of Cadiz, saw sixteen sail of ships with white pendants, and one with a white flag at the main topmast head. Upon which intelligence, the Admiral dispatched the *Centurion* the same day with orders to cruise between Cape Spartel and Cadiz; and, as often as wind and weather should permit, to look into Cadiz, to observe the motions of the enemy's ships there; and if he should judge they were in any forwardness for the sea, to return without any loss of time to him; but if they remained above the *Puntales*,<sup>1</sup> he was

<sup>1</sup> For modern chart of Cadiz harbour see N.R.S., vol. xxii, p. 386.

to continue in that station fourteen days. The same day he received a letter from the Prince of Hesse, expressing great satisfaction with the diligent application of the seamen on shore ; whereby he hoped everything would be suddenly completed ; desiring him to supply them with some medicines, shot, paper, twine, canvas, &c., and likewise that he would take the prisoners they had in the garrison aboard the ships ; all which was complied with the same day according to His Highness's request. The following day the *Lark* was detached to Tangier, to bring some materials Colonel Borr had left there ; likewise a most particular account was received concerning the ships at Cadiz by two English prisoners who escaped from thence, viz., that when they left that place, there were in the bay 18 sail of French men-of-war ; two of them of three decks, but [     ]<sup>1</sup> did not know the force of the rest ; that there were also fitting out with all expedition as many galleons as would complete the French to 30 sail ; that M. Pointis was there and commanded them ; and that they were designed for Gibraltar.

The 9th, the *Swallow* was detached a-cruising to the eastward. The same day the Prince desired a further supply of 20 more carpenters, in order to fix the palisades<sup>2</sup> in the ditch and in the covered way ; and representing that they were in want of candles, [and] flints and bullets for the English firelocks. The Admiral ordered the same day to the number of 2900 flints, 1384 pounds of musket-shot, and six chests of candles ; and also the additional number of carpenters desired ; not being willing to omit any thing that might be for the convenience of the garrison.

<sup>1</sup> They.

<sup>2</sup> ' Pallisadoes,' author.

The following day the Prince dispatched a tartan<sup>1</sup> with an express to the King of Spain ; and Sir John took the opportunity by the same conveyance to send a letter to Mr. Methuen, the English ambassador at Lisbon. 'I take this opportunity,' says he, 'to acquaint your Excellency that the garrison of Gibraltar is still in our possession, but dare not promise how long it may be so ; the enemy having raised another strong battery of heavy cannon, and dismounted most of ours ; the principal thing wanting to make it defensible is men, which I hope care will be taken to supply them with. And having observed some ships (notwithstanding all my care to intercept them) pass at times through the Straits, I need not mention the evil effects that may follow, if they should be French, and join those at Cadiz ; therefore desire that I may be reinforced with what English ships are at Lisbon, &c.'

On the 13th the Lark arrived from Tangier, where she had spoke with the Panther, who got thither in ten days from Lisbon ; bringing an account that the convoys with the Irish forces were expected there every day ; and that Sir Cloudisley Shovell was at Spithead with 30 sail of men-of-war, ready to proceed to those parts. This comfortable news Sir John presently communicated to the Prince of Hesse, who returned him a congratulating letter thereupon ; and acquainting him that the enemy by the motion in their trenches seemed to go on slow and sure ; so that he had hopes the recruits might arrive time enough to their relief. But alas ! Gibraltar might have been taken twice before their arrival,

<sup>1</sup> A fishing-boat or small merchant ship peculiar to the Western Mediterranean ; a one-masted craft with lateen mainsail and bowsprit carrying a jib. Cp. above, p. 190.



which did not happen till near a month afterwards ; and the fleet said to be at Spithead and ready to sail did not reach Lisbon till the May following.

The 14th in the morning, Sir John ordered all the boats manned and armed to row into the shore, as if they intended to land ; which, as the Prince acquainted him, had a very good effect, alarming the enemy's camp, so that horse and foot run down to the water-side, and their trenches were silent, so that they did not fire a gun in a considerable time after. Which success caused him to keep them frequently alarmed on that side ; and the enemy having dismounted the guns upon the hill, which it was impossible to mend so soon as the necessity required, at His Highness's request he supplied them with a sufficient number of carriages to remount their guns, and likewise with some firelocks, whilst those that were damaged were mending on board the ships.

The same day the Panther arrived from Tangier, bringing a letter from Captain Cooper of the Centurion ; advising, that in his cruise off Cadiz, he saw 19 or 20 sail of the enemy's ships, great part of them in the bay, the rest above the Puntales, with yards and topmasts up ; but, it being hazy, he could not discover their readiness for the sea. Upon this intelligence Sir John called a council of war, the 15th of November, to consider what was most proper to be done upon the several advices he had received of the preparations of the French at Cadiz. But before they came to any determination, he sent a copy of Captain Cooper's letter to the Prince of Hesse, and acquainted His Highness that he was with the officers of the fleet then in council ; and being apprehensive the enemy from Cadiz might come with a number of fireships and put them

to several inconveniences, which they should not be able to prevent in that Bay, it was their opinion that it would not only be for the better security of the fleet, but of the garrison, that they should leave the detachment of men they had already on shore, and go with the fleet to the other side of the Bay : that therefore they desired His Highness to take the same into consideration, and with the concurrence of the officers of the garrison to return him their opinion thereof. Whereupon His Highness having communicated the same to the Colonels of the several regiments in garrison, returned their opinion as follows, viz., that they all agreed the security of the fleet was of great consequence ; and that they consented to what the Admiral should think proper on this critical occasion. Upon the receipt of this opinion of the land officers, the council of war came to a resolution to remove with the fleet to the west part of the Bay, whilst the wind was westerly, for their better security against any attempt of the enemy ; leaving a ship to make such signals as should be ordered, if the town should be stormed or in any danger, and then they would immediately return, and contribute all that possibly they could to the preservation of the place.

The 15th, the *Garland* arrived from Lagos, with letters from Lisbon ; by whom Sir John received one from Mr. Methuen, the English Ambassador there, which I shall insert at length, to show the different temper His Excellency was now in ; and <sup>1</sup> seems intended to palliate his former proceedings.

SIR,—I have received the favour of your letter, written from Gibraltar the 3d of November, and I heartily congratulate your safe arrival there, and good success

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<sup>1</sup> It.

you have had ; which must be always acknowledged as owing to your great zeal and diligence, as well as to your conduct in this affair. What I now write is no more than what I have wrote to England since your departure, to be laid before Her Majesty ; whose service I am satisfied no man endeavours more than yourself. Although I find in your letter that the place is in a condition much different from what I thought by the Prince's letters to you, which came here since your departure ; yet I persuade myself you will have the honour to preserve that place to England ; for which I shall extremely rejoice. The Irish troops are not yet arrived, and my Lord Galway will not be here till to-morrow, or after to-morrow ; but I would not at all delay sending you by the Garland the assurance that there shall immediately be dispatched to you officers and engineers, with what necessaries we can, and some number of soldiers, till a greater force can come ; since I think the preservation of that place of the utmost importance to England ; and because we may possibly send you succours of all kinds from Algarve, although I cannot yet be particular in that. I do now dispatch the Garland to you, and desire you will immediately, upon the receipt of this, send two or three frigates to Lagos, that we may, in case of necessity, send a detachment of our troops from thence, &c.

Your Humble Servant,  
JO. METHUEN.

LISBON, 9th Nov. 1704.

In relation to the latter part of the letter, desiring that two or three ships might be sent to Algarve to wait for succours for the garrison, Sir John called a council of war, the 17th instant ; when, considering the certain intelligence they had received of the preparations of the French at Cadiz to attack them by sea, it was the opinion of the council they were superior to the Confederates ; and therefore it was resolved not to be safe to detach any ships to Lagos, or any other



port till they were in a better condition, by a reinforcement from England, to comply with such services. At night the signal agreed upon being made from the town in case of a storm, Sir John detached all the boats, manned and armed, to their assistance. But by the time they got ashore, the enemy retreated ; the alarm being caused only by the enemy's reconnoitring their works. So the boats presently returned.

The 18th, the Swallow came in from the eastward, bringing with her a French prize from Newfoundland. The next day Sir John received a letter from the Prince, acquainting him that the enemy had not worked anything that night against them, but only made a line behind the Rock, which looked more for fear than to attack them ; and, at His Highness's request, a further supply of medicines was delivered for the use of the garrison. The next day the wind being then at W.N.W., the fleet removed to the west <sup>1</sup> side of the bay. This motion of the fleet caused a great consternation in the enemy's camp ; who, fearing they were about to land some men, sent their cavalry to the sea-shore to oppose it ; which Sir John observing, ordered the frigates in to the shore to cannonade them ; and they had the opportunity to salute them with some broadsides, whereby a great many of them and their horses were killed and wounded. And after this, he directed the boats night and morning to row along the shore, to harass the enemy, and it had the desired effect ; for the Spanish cavalry and some battalions constantly drew up in the same place, and were considerably annoyed by

<sup>1</sup> Author's copy here has a pencil correction ' East.' But surely ' west ' is right and should stand.

the seamen and the cannon of the nearest frigates ; and these alarms likewise very much disturbed them in the new works they were making at the foot of the hill.

The 20th, the Prince of Hesse having received some intelligence from a deserter, sent Sir John an account of it, enclosed in a letter, as follows, viz. that he (Manuel Gonzales) deserted last night, and came into town that morning ; that one thousand French marines went from the camp on horseback, in order to go for Cadiz to man the French fleet, on Friday last about 9 o'clock in the morning ; that as soon as the confederate fleet arrived in Gibraltar Bay, they left off all thoughts of attacking the town, but by the hill ; and that now their whole hopes (*sic*) was from the French fleet in Cadiz ; and that the major part of the French in the camp were sick ; that they talked on shore of the French and Spanish fleet to consist of 40 sail ; that the enemy on shore consisted of 10,000 men, and that they had sent for 1000 or 1500 men of the militia of Malaga ; and that, if it were not proclaimed death for a Spaniard to fall out with a Frenchman, they would be killing each other every day.

This intelligence made it necessary to provide for the security of the fleet. Wherefore Sir John calling a council of war the same day, it was resolved to send for all the men from the shore and all the marines except the Gunners, and Carpenters' Crews. And this resolution he immediately sent to the Prince, at the same time assuring His Highness that nothing but their unhappy circumstances, for want of men (they being 1280 short of their complements) to defend their ships, and the opportunity of fair weather that night could have obliged them to come to so sudden

a resolution. For at their first arrival above half of the English squadron were only manned to their lowest complement; and several of them were at present very sickly. The next day the *Centurion* brought in a French prize of 300 tons and 24 guns, from Martinique, bound to Marseilles. In the evening Sir John ordered the boats to alarm the enemy's camp, and in the meantime detached the *Centurion* to look into the Bay behind the camp to make what discoveries he could; and whether it was not possible to annoy the enemy's batteries on that side. But they saw only two small boats hauled up upon the sand, and reported it was not practicable to hurt their batteries, by reason of the sandhills that lay between them and the water.

The 23rd, the wind shifted suddenly to the east, and E.N.E., and blew so fresh that the fleet could not return back to the east side of the Bay, as they intended. The next day it grew worse, and the fleet being in want of ground-tackle, it was very fortunate that any of them escaped driving ashore. The *Panther* drove and was in great danger, making the signal of distress; but the weather was so bad, there was no sending any assistance to her, so that it was a great providence she did not go ashore: but about nine o'clock she got under sail, with much difficulty, and came to an anchor again in a place of more security in the bottom of the Bay. Soon after, the cable of Sir John's own ship, the *Nottingham*, parted, being cut by the foulness of the ground; and most of the ships of the fleet lost their anchors and cables. The Dutch lost the greatest part of theirs; and one of their ships narrowly escaped going ashore. And the rest endeavouring to assist her, lost most of their boats. In fine, the



whole fleet were in the most imminent danger of being drove ashore into the jaws of the enemy, and thereby determining the fate of the fleet and the town of Gibraltar at once.

The 25th, Sir John received a letter from the Prince (the weather being somewhat abated) acquainting him that the enemy's battery went on but slow ; but that the few men he had could not possibly repair those works which were absolutely necessary ; that for the defence of the breach a quantity of blunderbusses would be of extraordinary use ; desiring therefore as many as he could spare ; and likewise a supply of wine from the victuallers. This letter he answered the same day ; that, as soon as wind and weather should permit, he would order the victuallers to deliver the wine as he desired ; and he would likewise get the blunderbusses together, and send as soon as there was an opportunity of doing it ; withal, that he was very much concerned to acquaint His Highness how much the fleet had been endangered by the late storm ; and if the same should come upon them again, he could not foresee the misfortune they should be liable to : neither did he know whether he should be able, after the loss of so many anchors, to secure the ships in any part of the Bay ; but that he intended to remove the first opportunity.

Accordingly, the next day he removed with the fleet over to the east side of the Bay, and called a council of war to consider what was proper to be done for their security upon the loss of so many anchors and cables ; but did not come to any determination ; Sir John thinking it necessary to have the presence of the Prince of Hesse and some of the Field Officers upon this extraordinary occasion, that they might resolve

upon something as well for the preservation of Gibraltar as the fleet. Accordingly the next morning, His Highness, with Colonel Borr and Colonel Purcell having come on board, he resumed the council of war ; wherein he proposed to leave 600 seamen ashore for the defence of the garrison, and to take the opportunity of the then easterly wind to proceed to Lisbon for the succours for Gibraltar, if he did not meet them in his passage : or to look into Cadiz and offer the enemy battle, and then to cruise off of Cape Spartel till the succours joined him ; in both these proposals having an especial regard to the safety of the succours, on which all depended. But the Prince and Field Officers present rejected them both, though Sir John used all the arguments he could think of to make them sensible of the danger the succours would be exposed to of being intercepted by the enemy. The reasons they gave, for their not consenting to his going out of the Straits, were that it would endanger the loss of the town ; for there being several disaffected persons in it that daily discovered and betrayed to the enemy their proceedings and the condition of the garrison, and the soldiers being greatly fatigued, they feared great numbers of them would desert, could they convince them<sup>1</sup> that the fleet might not return to their assistance, should they be attacked whilst the fleet was to the windward.<sup>2</sup>

The council of war were therefore obliged to come to other resolutions ; and it was at length agreed that the only security they had left was for the fleet to remain there whilst the wind was easterly, and to go to sea the first westerly wind,

<sup>1</sup> Sc. The Prince's staff feared that the soldiers would desert if the disaffected could convince them . . .

<sup>2</sup> (?) Leeward.

keeping as near Gibraltar as the wind and weather should permit : for lying on the west side of the bay, with the wind easterly, would endanger the loss of the ships ; and continuing on the east side would expose them to the enemy's fireships, it being impossible to get under sail from that side with the wind to the southward of west ; that for their further intelligence of the preparations and readiness of the French, two frigates should be detached to look into Cadiz ; and that one frigate and the Star bomb should be left behind at Gibraltar to prevent any attempts of the enemy upon the New Mole ; and [ ]<sup>1</sup> to leave 100 men when they sailed to guard that and the posts next the sea ; and whilst the fleet should remain there, to send 150 men every day to work on shore.

According to these resolutions, Captain Bertie was detached in the Panther with the Garland to sail and look into Cadiz, and bring an account of the number and readiness of the ships there ; after which he was to send away the Garland to Tangier to fetch refreshments for the garrison of Gibraltar ; unless the readiness of the enemy's ships should make it necessary to bring her back along with him. The same day at night, a barcalonga was dispatched for Faro with the Prince's letters to the Kings of Spain and Portugal ; and the Admiral's to the Lord High Admiral, and to the English Ambassador at Lisbon ; acquainting the latter of the reason of not complying with his desire in his letter of the 9th of November about sending some frigates for forces to Lagos, with the council of war thereupon ; concluding, that Gibraltar would be in a dangerous condition, if he should engage the enemy and not get the better

<sup>1</sup> Supply ' the Admiral agreed.'



of them : and in his letter to the Lord High Admiral's secretary, having acquainted him with the several accounts he had received of the preparations of the enemy and the councils of war thereupon, ' I will not presume to judge,' says he, ' whether they are for this place or the West Indies ; but am of opinion that, if they are intended for the former, Gibraltar will be in danger, if we should not be in a condition to return to its assistance ; for nothing but the countenance of a fleet, or speedy succours which we daily expect, can preserve the place, in the condition the enemy has made it by their continual battering and bombarding.'

The 2nd of December, the Panther and Garland, which had been detached to look into Cadiz, returned, bringing an account that there were in the Bay of Bulls 17 sail at anchor in the line of battle ; two others under sail plying off and on ; and 10 sail more rigged, five in Cadiz Bay, and five above the Puntales. Upon this advice it was high time to be gone, and the wind favouring, Sir John sailed with the fleet, leaving the Leake and Star Bomb to defend the New Mole ; and having put the 100 men on shore under the command of a Lieutenant, with the provisions for them, that they might not be obliged to use that of the garrison who had now but enough.

The 4th, at night, being within two leagues of Gibraltar, a small English ship, which the English Ambassador had sent from Lisbon, came into the fleet, bringing Sir John a letter from His Excellency, acquainting him that the battalions were most embarked, and hoped all would be, so as to sail in four or five days at furthest under convoy of the Antelope and Roebuck ; consisting of the battalion of Her Majesty's Guards,

the Lord Barrymore's, and a Dutch regiment ; bringing with them a great quantity of tools of all sorts, and a month's provision for 3000 men ; and that 500 Portuguese were at Lagos, and only wanted a couple of frigates to convoy them to Gibraltar. Upon this intelligence, Sir John called a council of war the next morning early ; there being then but very little wind, and that northerly ; and it was resolved that, upon<sup>1</sup> the readiness and strength of the enemy at Cadiz, and the Lord Ambassador's advice of the forces coming from Lisbon, to take the first opportunity of an easterly wind to pass the Straits and look into Cadiz, to offer the enemy battle ; and if they declined engaging them, then to come to a further resolution where to cruise, to join and protect the forces coming from Lisbon ; but that if the wind should continue and blow hard westerly, they would endeavour to get to an anchor on the east side of Gibraltar ; or if that should be found impracticable, Cape Malaga was to be the place. And he wrote His Highness the Prince of Hesse the reason of this resolution ; that it was in order to preserve the succours expected, and he wished it might not be too late ; that the reason this rendez-vous was different from the former, was because some of the Dutch ships sailed so very ill, and were leewardly, that if the wind should blow hard westerly, they would be drove too far up the Straits ; there being no anchoring on this side at that time of the year.

This resolution, we may remember, was proposed by Sir John in the council of Sea and Land Officers before he left Gibraltar, but was rejected by the latter ; whereupon the Council was obliged

<sup>1</sup> For ' upon ' read ' in view of.'

to come to other resolutions. But upon this last intelligence, it being certain the succours were by this time upon their passage, and [ ]<sup>1</sup> the almost unavoidable danger they were in from the enemy at Cadiz, who were either at sea or ready to push out upon them ; he thought himself obliged to come to that resolution without further consulting the officers of the garrison, as being the only expedient to preserve the convoy, on which the fate of Gibraltar depended. And had not the wind prevented him, it might have had the desired success ; for nothing could be so effectual to secure the succours, as to shut up the enemy in harbour ; nor nothing more brave, than with a fleet, weaker both in number and force, ill-manned and ill-provided, to challenge and defy the enemy at their own door, and oblige them to submit to be shut up in their own port, or come out and fight. So much resolution must naturally intimidate them, and make them believe our fleet much stronger than it really was. But the best concerted measures by sea are still liable to the inconstancy of wind and weather, and the fleet remained wind-bound, not able to pass the Straits' Mouth.

Sir John was on this occasion under the greatest anxiety for the safety of the convoy ; and the same evening an express was brought him by a felucca from the Prince of Hesse, which put him out of all doubt as to the danger of the succours. By this he had an account that the day before a Dutch privateer put into Gibraltar, having been chased into the Straits by a French squadron of 18 sail that were cruising off Cape Spartel. In this extremity, to do all he could, he immedi-

<sup>1</sup> Considering.



ately dispatched a letter to Messieurs Warren and Hampton, merchants of Tangier, acquainting them that there was a reinforcement of 2500 men, under convoy of two men-of-war, coming from Lisbon to Gibraltar, which were ordered to keep along the Barbary shore ; and likewise, that the French with 18 sail of men-of-war were come out of Cadiz and were cruising off Cape Spartel with a design, as he feared, to intercept them ; that therefore he was to desire them, if the wind continued westerly, (if it were possible) to send to El Araish <sup>1</sup> and hire a small vessel to lie off at a convenient distance at sea, to give notice to the said convoys of their danger, and deliver to the Commander-in-Chief the enclosed letter from him ; but that if the wind should come easterly before they had employed a boat, they needed not then to do it, because he designed to pass the Straits and give the enemy battle. He likewise detached the Lark to cruise off of Cape Cabarita,<sup>2</sup> with directions, as often as wind and weather permitted, to send his boat ashore to Gibraltar, to know the state of the place ; and if His Highness the Prince of Hesse had occasion to send him to him, he was to do it ; and if he should discover the enemy coming into the Straits, he was to join him directly, according to the rendez-vous ; which if the wind was westerly, was the east side of Gibraltar, or under Cape Malaga or Roquetas<sup>3</sup> ; but if easterly, at Gibraltar or Cape Spartel ; but that when the weather was moderate, he was to keep plying to windward under the Barbary shore.

<sup>1</sup> 'Larach,' author's spelling.

<sup>2</sup> Immediately opposite Europa Point on the other side of the Bay.

<sup>3</sup> Lat. 36.45 N., Long. 2.37 W.

Meantime the Prince of Hesse redoubled his diligence for preventing the designs of the enemy, and spent the days in the works, and most part of the nights in the covered way. The enemy (as has been before related) had dismounted above 40 pieces of the garrison's cannon, ruined the parapet of the curtain,<sup>1</sup> and the face of the bastion of the sea,<sup>2</sup> and that of the bastion of the mountain<sup>3</sup>; had made a breach in the former, and likewise in the curtain, which they might have mounted by favour of the stones and other rubbish beat down by their cannon, had not the same been carefully carried off. These materials were very useful to make a work in the ditch (for the better defence of the foot of the breach yet standing about eight foot high) of a very good solid work, which the cannon of the enemy could not reach. The besieged had beside a double row of palisades very strong in the middle of the ditch, parallel to the curtain; and before the same had made a sort of ditch which was filled by the tide, and wherein they kept water. All these works had been completed by the diligence of the seamen detached from the fleet before they left Gibraltar, and could not be battered by the cannon of the enemy till they had lodged themselves in the covered way. But there was a great mine ready, consisting of four chambers, which extended to the right and left of the glacis and were divided into several branches, which came from the Grand Gallery leading to the ditch; which mine could not have failed of having done great execution, had the enemy attempted to

<sup>1</sup> The Curtain of St. Bernard; see *An Exact Plan*, p. 232.

<sup>2</sup> The Bastion of St. Paul.

<sup>3</sup> The Bastion of St. Peter.

lodge themselves on the covered way. But because they seemed to have altered their design, and threatened to attack a long line, which the besieged had on the declivity of the Rock on the right, the Prince of Hesse caused four small entrenchments to be made at the end of it, with three batteries of two pieces of cannon each, which flanked the avenues of the glacis, and overlooked the advanced work of the enemy.

This was the condition of the place, which had like to have been much worse. For the wind continuing easterly but not strong enough to stem the current, by the 7th at night the fleet were drove a considerable way to the eastward. And then it came fresh to the W.S.W. ; when just as it begun to blow favourably, the Prince's felucca came on board the Admiral, and brought him the melancholy news that, the day before, the transports with the succours on board, under convoy of the *Antelope*, *Greenwich*, *Newcastle*, and *Roebuck*, fell in with the enemy's squadron off Cape Spartel. But by good fortune the *Antelope* with eight sail got off, and arrived at Gibraltar the next day ; and soon after the *Newcastle* with seven more. And of the four that were missing, only one was taken by the enemy and carried into Cadiz, very much to the disgrace of the French squadron, and to the reputation of the convoy. But this misfortune had not happened, if the imminent danger the garrison of Gibraltar was in of being lost, would have permitted the land-officers to have consented to the Admiral's proposal at first to go off Cadiz. However, the besieged by this received a reinforcement of 2000 men which arrived very seasonably. For some seditious persons were about this time set at work by the Marquis de Villadarias to discourage the garrison ;



and a mutinous petition was already framed to have pressed the Prince of Hesse to surrender; which being timely discovered, His Highness ordered a Spanish Colonel and some other conspirators to be secured.

The wind continued westerly till the 13th, in which time, by the ill sailing of the Dutch, the fleet was drove as high as Maderel;<sup>1</sup> and then the wind coming to the eastward, Sir John made the best of his way to Gibraltar again. The next day the Newcastle joined the fleet with three transports, which by the Prince of Hesse's orders he was convoying to Tetuan, to get provisions for the garrison; but the wind being easterly, the Admiral ordered them to keep him company. By them he received a letter from His Highness, dated the 12th instant; acquainting him that that evening they resolved to make a sally, which succeeded to his expectation, by ruining the enemy's two next trenches to their palisades, so that it would be some days' work before they could make it up again; that he hoped Sir John would be at Gibraltar very soon, that some dispositions might be taken how to drive the enemy quite out of their trenches; which only could be the securer expected (*sic*) by his good assistance, &c. According to His Highness's desire, he stood with an easy sail for Gibraltar, sending the Leopard before him with a letter to the Prince, to acquaint him that he should have been with him before, if he had not been detained by giving chase to some ships, he believed to be Captain Legge with the transports, but had not yet spoke withal; and therefore sent this by the Leopard to let him know that their provisions

<sup>1</sup> (?) Marbella.

would not last above five weeks longer ; and he believed the Dutch would press to take the opportunity of the fair wind that then was to repair to Lisbon ; that therefore he desired His Highness would please to consider, in the meantime, what further service the fleet could do the garrison ; because as soon as he should anchor, he intended to call a council of war, and should be very glad if His Highness, with some of the Field Officers he approved of, would be present thereat.

In the afternoon, he arrived with the fleet in the Bay, and presently called a council of war upon the present circumstances of the fleet and garrison ; wherein it was resolved that, as Gibraltar was now reinforced with 2000 men but in want of some necessaries and fire-arms and the fleet of provisions, [ ]<sup>1</sup> to supply the garrison with what muskets, musket-shot, flints, sea-coals and armourers they could spare, and to detach to Lagos two or three frigates, to take in and bring the forces that were there ready for embarkation, and leave another to attend the garrison ; and then with the first opportunity of weather to repair with the fleet to Lisbon for a supply of provisions, anchors, cables, and what other stores they had occasion for.

The next day, by Brigadier Shrimpton Sir John received an account from the Prince of Hesse of such things as were material to be done before the sailing of the fleet. That considering by the succours they had lately received, they were now in a condition to annoy the enemy, and to hinder them, not only in their approaches, but to oblige them to retire, by ruining their batteries ; without which performance they should

<sup>1</sup> The sense requires, ' It would be advisable.'

never be at rest ; and that the sooner this was put in execution, the more (*sic*) it would be for the service ; by reason they were now in good health, which length of time might prevent by sickness or otherwise, and be reduced to (*sic*) the same fate as before the succours came.<sup>1</sup> That the assistance of the boats from the fleet would be of great help on this occasion in approaching their <sup>2</sup> batteries from behind, where their reserve of horse stand <sup>3</sup> ; keeping so that their shot might reach ashore, and hinder them <sup>4</sup> falling upon their <sup>5</sup> men ; whereby they <sup>6</sup> might promise to themselves the desired success, being able to be performed by break of day ; and the countenance of the fleet, being by them, would keep the enemy more in awe, not to draw all their forces to one particular place. Besides these propositions, were the following memoranda ; that the provisions in the four victuallers being the principal point they were to take care of, that orders be given that all boats be employed in landing them immediately ; <sup>7</sup> that there was no method settled for bringing

<sup>1</sup> In this sentence the rules of syntax are ignored. Read, 'The Prince sent him word that, thanks to the reinforcements, he could now not merely repel the besiegers, but by destroying their batteries force them to withdraw ; that, until this was accomplished, there would be no respite from anxiety ; and that the sooner it was undertaken the better, because siege conditions would, with postponement, reduce the garrison to the weakness from which it suffered before succours came.'

<sup>2</sup> The enemy's.

<sup>3</sup> Stood.

<sup>4</sup> The enemy's cavalry.

<sup>5</sup> (?) Our.

<sup>6</sup> And hereby the Confederates, &c.

<sup>7</sup> Syntax again involved. Read, 'Since no point was more important than the unlading of provisions from the four newly arrived victuallers, orders ought at once to be given that all boats should be employed upon this errand immediately.'



over fresh provisions to the garrison from Barbary, which were much wanted for the sick and wounded ; that they could not necessarily be without three frigates ; and to leave<sup>1</sup> under their protection all the barcalongas till the coming back of the fleet, not only to cover any insults from the sea, but to send to and fro to Portugal with intelligence, if any emergencies should happen ; that all the marines on board should be sent on shore and that all the prisoners consisting of eighty odd, and all unable soldiers not fit for service, taken off ; and that the baggage of Colonel Gonzales and others on board the Pembroke may be sent on shore, being of importance for the further discovery of some designs contrary to the public interest.

Upon this memorial, Sir John called a council of war the 16th, and it was resolved to cover and facilitate any attempt from the garrison by sallying out upon the enemy<sup>2</sup> ; that they would stay there till the next morning, and send the boats manned and armed to row alongshore in the Bay ; that, the ships of the squadron being all foul, they did not think it safe to leave any more than one to attend the garrison, according to their resolution of the 14th instant ; that the transports should be ordered to receive the sick and wounded men in<sup>3</sup> the garrison ; but that, having already a considerable number of prisoners in the fleet, and a part of them very sick and dead, it was their opinion, not to hazard the infection of the ships' companies by receiving any more. According to this resolution, he

<sup>1</sup> It would be expedient to leave . . .

<sup>2</sup> To facilitate any attempt of the garrison to sally out upon the enemy.

<sup>3</sup> Of.

ordered all the boats to be ready against evening to assist the garrison in attempting to dislodge the enemy from their batteries. But before night he received a letter from the Prince acquainting him that, having consulted the officers concerning it, they considered that the enemy being now more upon their guard by the squadron being present than at any other time, and the boats not being able to come so near as was desired, they had agreed to defer it.

The 17th in the morning, there springing up a small gale easterly, Sir John weighed with the fleet and stood out of the bay. But at eleven at night it came fresh westerly, so he was forced to stand into the bay again, and anchored on the west side. In the morning he called a council of war, to consider whether they should keep the sea with the wind westerly, or remain in the bay ; but came to no resolution. The same day the Greenwich arrived from the westward, with the Lord Donegal on board, and some succours for the garrison. The 20th, a flag of truce from the Marquis de Villadarias came on board Sir John to treat about the exchange of prisoners, and brought off ten Englishmen, for which he ordered back nine French and 12 Spanish prisoners who were most sickly.

The day following he held another council of war ; wherein having considered the advantages they had of watering whilst they lay in the bay, and the difficulties they should be exposed to by going to sea with a westerly wind with such a number of transports ; it was resolved to remain in the bay whilst the wind should be westerly, and to proceed to Lisbon the first easterly wind, pursuant to their former resolution. That day the Swallow brought in a prize of 200 tons from

Newfoundland, which was followed soon after by the Centurion with another prize from Martinique bound to Marseilles ; and some days afterwards, in the absence of the fleet, the Star bomb and the Swallow prize took in the bay with their boats a brigantine, laden with wine and brandy for the enemy's camp.

The 23rd, another flag of truce came on board the Admiral from the enemy's camp ; but nothing further could be agreed on in relation to the exchange of prisoners, unless Sir John would consent to set the French and Spaniards at liberty there, upon the Marquis giving the English and Dutch passports to travel from Cadiz, Seville and other places, to Lisbon ; which he did not think reasonable to comply with ; not only in consideration that the way to be travelled was so disproportionable, but of the immediate service it would do the enemy ; not only by strengthening their camp, but better manning their ships at Cadiz. Soon after the Garland was detached to Tetuan for fresh provisions for the garrison, and towards the evening the wind coming easterly, the fleet weighed, and by midnight got under sail, and stood out of the bay.

The 28th, at night, Sir John detached the Centurion with the utmost dispatch to Lagos with the Prince of Hesse's letters ; one from himself to Mr. Methuen at Lisbon, and another to be forwarded to England to the Lord High Admiral. In that to the Ambassador he acquainted His Excellency that he left the garrison of Gibraltar in a very good condition and that he was coming to Lisbon. But before he had dispatched the ship with the packet, the wind coming about southerly (by which he was doubtful he should be forced back to Gibraltar)



he further acquainted his Excellency with the state of their provisions, which would not last above a month at farthest ; so that if the westerly winds (which might be expected at that time of the year) should detain him any time there, they should want provisions ; the garrison not having for above thirteen weeks at short allowance, which would soon be consumed if he should be obliged to draw from them ; that therefore if there were any men-of-war and provisions at Lisbon, he hoped care would be taken to keep them from starving.

At the same time he dispatched the *Leopard* and *Tiger* before him to Lisbon, with orders to apply themselves to Mr. Cheney the store-keeper there for their being cleaned ; for which they were to use their utmost dispatch ; and as soon as they were ready, to proceed with the *Centurion* (who had the like orders) to transport the Portuguese forces that were at Lagos. In his letter likewise to the Lord High Admiral, after having acquainted his Highness with his proceedings till he left Gibraltar (particularly in relation to the resolution of the council of war of the 27th of November where he gives the reasons of the land-officers for disagreeing in opinion with him and the rest of the sea-officers), he adds, ' This I am certain of, that nothing but the resolution and courage of the Prince of Hesse and some of the officers could have preserved the place so long ; for at our first coming, several of them were of opinion that it was not tenable ; and if I had not supplied them with 700 men at several times, to work day and night, and to guard the New Mole, they could not have maintained it ' ; but <sup>1</sup> that before he

<sup>1</sup> Sc. ' adding.'

sailed, for some days the enemy had very much abated their cannonading and bombarding the town, which he believed proceeded from the damage their guns and mortars had received in their vents, by their incessant firing; and according to the report of deserters, who daily came in, they very much despaired of taking the town, since they found that Monsieur Pointis with the French fleet, contrary to their expectation, did not attack him, nor succeed in his design of intercepting the forces; so that all their dependence was now upon the mischief they expected to do with the new mortars, which they lately received. He then goes on to relate the proceedings of the fleet; that, after they left Gibraltar the 23rd instant, they had so little and variable wind, they were got no further; and considering that their wine had been out a fortnight, and the ships' companies put to the allowance of one quart of water per man a day, and half their allowance of provisions (which began to cause sickness in the fleet), and that all the ships were foul; he did not think it advisable to send three ships, according to their resolution of the 14th instant, to Lagos, for forces there, till they were cleaned and re-victualled; for by an intercepted letter from Ceuta, he understood that Monsieur Du Casse with six sail from Toulon was daily expected to join those at Cadiz. 'You will also see,' says he, 'by the copy of the consul of Algiers' letter, what further preparations they are making. It is indeed humbly my opinion that they will leave nothing unattempted that will contribute to the recovery of Gibraltar, and therefore could wish that I might be reinforced: for the Dutch are so very foul (it being two years since they cleaned) that I am doubtful they will insist upon

their necessity of careening before they go upon any further service. But I shall be better able to judge upon my arrival at Lisbon, what will be most proper to be done for the preservation and security of that garrison, and then be more particular on that head.' Lastly, he concludes, by desiring His Royal Highness would empower him to hold courts martial; there having been some irregularities committed, which he did not think himself sufficiently empowered to enquire into, by his warrant when he was Rear-Admiral. But he intended however to proceed upon it, if he did not receive another very speedily.

By these letters we may understand the condition of the fleet and Gibraltar, when Sir John left that place; after which he endeavoured to make the best of his way to Lisbon. But finding himself very much retarded by the Dutch, who being foul sailed very heavily, the 2nd of January he sent the Dutch Admiral a letter to acquaint him that the wind being likely to retard their passage, and his <sup>1</sup> presence being absolutely necessary at Lisbon, in order to get the ships cleaned and refitted that were to go upon immediate service and to dispatch some other affairs of moment, he desired he would not take it ill, if by making the best of his way thither with four or five ships, he was obliged to leave him behind; not but if he should disapprove of it, he would stay with him. But as this motion was so much for the benefit of the common cause, it could not possibly meet with the least objection. Whereupon Sir John (being then about 50 leagues to the westward of the Southward Cape) striking his flag, with the Nottingham, Swallow, Newcastle

<sup>1</sup> Sir John Leake's.



and Antelope, pursued his course to Lisbon privately ; having appointed Captain Hicks with the rest of the squadron and transports to keep company with the Dutch. The 8th he got off of the Rock of Lisbon, upon which he re-hoisted his flag, and the next day arrived in Lisbon river, where he was joined two days afterwards by the rest of the fleet. This was the conclusion of a very difficult and fatiguing enterprise to all concerned in it, but more particularly to the Prince of Hesse and Sir John Leake, whose unwearied zeal and entire harmony, was the only means that could have preserved the place so long under so many difficulties against so powerful an enemy. And now leaving Gibraltar once more in a state of defence with a good garrison, I shall conclude this chapter. How they were reduced to the necessity of a further assistance from the fleet, and were as fortunately relieved the second time, will be the subject of the next.

## CHAPTER VIII<sup>1</sup>

*Sir John is made Vice-Admiral of the White. He relieves Gibraltar the second time, taking and destroying the French squadron there. Whereupon the enemy raise the siege and he returns to Lisbon.*

THE maintaining Gibraltar against the efforts of France and Spain, who had vowed to sacrifice all to the regaining that place, was an act so great and glorious that it may well find a place amongst the many wonders of Her Majesty's reign. For if we consider the united force of those two crowns to recover it; the insuperable difficulties the garrison laboured under, being weak and sickly; almost all their cannon dismounted; a breach without, and conspiracies within, with the length of time they defended themselves against so powerful an enemy; and the fleet, from whence was all their hopes, destitute of all sort of stores, and at length forced to keep the sea for want of anchors; short of provisions, as well as 1200 men of their complements, besides many sick; yet obliged to furnish the garrison almost constantly with 700 men to do their work and defend part of their outworks; and lastly, in continual apprehensions of being attacked by

<sup>1</sup> The period covered by this chapter extends from 9th January to 12th April, 1705.

a superior force of the enemy : all these difficulties, (augmented by the season of the year) with the continual fatigues, which the Prince of Hesse and Sir John Leake sustained in taking the necessary precautions for their safety and defence ; and the disquietudes of mind arising from the uncertainty of events ; all these circumstances considered, this action may claim the pre-eminence, with the greatest of our naval successes that the war produced.<sup>1</sup>

But leaving the garrison of Gibraltar for a while, well provided with all things and a good garrison to defend themselves, we must attend the proceedings of the fleet, which, as I observed in the conclusion of the last chapter, Sir John having left about fifty leagues to the westward of the Southward Cape, proceeded before in the Nottingham, with the Swallow, Newcastle and Antelope and arrived at Lisbon the 9th of January. This he did, because the Dutch being very foul, sailed heavily, and he was impatient to be at Lisbon to expedite the cleaning and refitting the ships that were to carry the forces from Lagos to Gibraltar.

As soon as he arrived, he presently gave notice to the English Ambassador, who immediately sent him a packet from England, which had arrived in his absence. This packet brought him the agreeable news that Rear-Admiral Wishart with four sail and a convoy of stores and provisions might be expected at Lisbon in a short time ; and likewise enclosed some orders from the Lord High Admiral for trying Captain Legge and Captain Kempthorne, and for sending two ships to the

<sup>1</sup> This sentence must be accepted in the spirit rather than the letter. It defies both accident and syntax as valiantly as Sir John defied France and Spain.



Brazils. Two days after, the rest of the English squadron with the transports arrived. The Dutch, whom they were ordered to keep company with to satisfy them, being sensible how much it might retard the public service, consented they should leave them and make the best of their way before, which indeed was very well judged; for the Dutch did not arrive till long afterwards.

The 13th, Sir John dispatched a letter to England to give His Royal Highness an account of his proceedings since he left Gibraltar, the circumstances of that garrison, and the condition of the fleet. After a previous account of his arrival at Lisbon; and acknowledging the receipt of His Highness's orders, particularly as to that for sending two ships to Brazil; he says the Canterbury which was one of the ships designed for that service not being sheathed (nor any of his squadron but the Gloucester and Assurance, the latter whereof was disabled in her masts and very weak) he was doubtful whether he could comply with those orders till she had had a survey and repair, which he had not yet had time to do. Neither did he find that the King of Portugal, according to the Ambassador's account, was very pressing for their speedy going. He then proceeds to the circumstances of Gibraltar.

'In my last,' says he, 'I acquainted you in what condition I left that place, and of my apprehensions of the enemy's getting a squadron of ships together, solely for the reduction thereof; and, hearing since my arrival here that the camp before it has been reinforced, do believe it absolutely necessary to keep all the ships with me, till I have a more certain and particular account, or till the place is recruited with more men and provisions, to make it defensible till the

arrival of the Grand Fleet. For 'tis humbly my opinion, if any part of the squadron (according to my former orders) should be sent to England, the enemy has so good intelligence from hence, that it will prove of ill consequence.' [Adding]<sup>1</sup> that since his arrival at Lisbon, he had been informed of fourteen sail of large ships seen off the Burlings, standing to the Southward Cape ; since which time they were seen off of the Southward Cape by some ships he left behind him ; and that it was reported at Lisbon that ten sail of French men-of-war were got into Cadiz ; that as to the condition of his squadron, it was not without the utmost concern he must acquaint him that the companies of the ships under his command were very sickly, and no convenient place to be had ashore for their reception, though he made the greatest application for one the last time he was there ; that he must likewise acquaint him [that] the want of ordnance stores had been, and then was, very great, and abundantly more than could be purchased there, occasioned by their continual compliance with the demands of the garrison of Gibraltar ; that he was also doubtful there was not naval stores sufficient, especially sails, to put the squadron in a condition for the sea ; but the expectation of Rear-Admiral Wishart coming thither, and bringing stores and provisions with him, encouraged him to hope they should not be put to any inconveniency therein. In the meantime he had ordered every ship to take in a month's provisions, and to be put into the readiest and best posture, that the circumstances of time, place and deficiency of stores would admit of.

<sup>1</sup> From this point onwards square brackets in the text will be employed to indicate words omitted by the author and necessary to complete the sense.

[He further went on to say] that the surgeons of the ships had generally complained of their want of medicines; he therefore desired they might be furnished with them from England, proper medicines being not to be purchased or otherways procured there, but at very extravagant prices; that he had likewise enquired of the Agent Victualler what quantity of provisions there was in store, and found only a proportion for about forty days for his squadron and the garrison of Gibraltar, but for the ships only might serve double that time;<sup>1</sup> lastly, that he intended to have dispatched a frigate to England, as soon as he got out of the Straits, with his letter of the 28th ultimo, had not their general want of provisions impeded it; particularly bread was so short that several ships had not to feed their companies for above the day they arrived there; that upon his arrival at Lisbon, he found the *Tartar* was gone from hence to Gibraltar in quest of him with some further orders from His Royal Highness, but she not being returned, he could not tell what commands they contained.

The next day the *Tartar* arrived, bringing His Royal Highness's orders for sending that ship and the *Newport* to Nice; and some others together with a letter from Mr. Clarke, His Royal Highness's secretary, acquainting him that the Plate fleet would be coming home that winter from the West Indies in single ships or very small numbers; and that therefore it was recommended to him, as soon as the business of Gibraltar was over, to have part of his squadron looking out for them about the Westward Cape<sup>2</sup>; which

<sup>1</sup> Although these might serve for double the time if used for the ships alone.

<sup>2</sup> Cape Finisterre.



in all probability they would make ; that all imaginable care was taken<sup>1</sup> to hasten more ships, and that it was expected six or seven 70-gun ships would be ready to come to him, with provisions for 2000 men for eight months, in three weeks time or thereabouts.

The following days Sir John held several Courts Martial to enquire into some misdemeanours ; wherein Captain Legge of the *Antelope*, the Surgeon of the *Roebuck*, and the Chaplain of the *Assurance*, were dismissed the Service ; the former for breach of orders, and the two others for disobedience to command. Captain Cook and the officers of the *Terror* bomb, which was burnt by the enemy at Gibraltar, were honourably acquitted. The Master of the *Centurion* was likewise tried and dismissed the Service for drunkenness and neglect of duty. About the same time Sir John commissioned the *Swallow's Prize*, which being a new ship, and sailing extremely well, made a better and larger Sixth Rate than any we then had.<sup>2</sup>

The 22nd, pursuant to His Royal Highness's orders, he dispatched the *Tartar* and *Newport* to Nice and *Villefranche* to join the *Lyme* and *Mary Galley* and two ships of the States General, in order to assist the Duke of Savoy ; with orders to these four ships to put themselves under the command of the senior captain, who was to follow such orders as he should receive from Her Majesty's Minister at the Court of Savoy, provided they were judged practicable at a consultation of the officers of those ships and the [ships of the] States General. And he took the opportunity to put some ordnance stores on board these ships with directions, if

<sup>1</sup> *Sc.* was being taken.

<sup>2</sup> See above, p. 234.

it could be done with safety, to put them ashore for the garrison of Gibraltar; and likewise a letter for the Prince of Hesse, acquainting him that he was preparing the three ships to transport the Portuguese troops from Lagos to Gibraltar, and making the greatest dispatch in getting the rest of his squadron in a condition for the sea.

Whilst Sir John was thus vigilant for the safety of Gibraltar, the enemy were no less active and resolved to wrest it from the hands of the Confederates. Indeed, upon their receiving advice of the safe arrival of the succours to reinforce that garrison, they began to think it a doubtful undertaking; and there were several councils held at Madrid to consider whether they should raise the siege or not. The Spaniards were for giving it over, but the French represented the honour of King Philip was so nearly concerned in that affair, that all possible means ought to be used to take the place. King Philip at the same time made the Count Toulouse a Knight of the Golden Fleece, and sent him a letter, thanking him for what he had done for the security of the coast of Spain, of which he might be styled the deliverer; and [saying] that he expected yet greater effects of his services, namely, the reduction of Gibraltar; that he expected every moment to hear the Baron Pointis was arrived there, and did not doubt but that he would gain a considerable advantage over the enemy, if they durst stand him.

These preparations of the enemy Sir John was advised of the 23rd instant by a French ship from Cadiz, with 150 English prisoners sent from thence to Lisbon to be exchanged for French and Spanish prisoners on board the fleet. By these he was informed that three days before, when they

left Cadiz, Monsieur Pointis' squadron (consisting of 14 men-of-war, four galleons fitted for service, with two or three frigates, and four fireships) were above the Puntales ; and that they hourly expected to be joined by eight sail, that were said to be at Malaga, and were then to proceed to Gibraltar. The following day the Dutch arrived, fourteen days after the English squadron with the transports, and sixteen days after Sir John's arrival at Lisbon ; which sufficiently shows how difficult and almost impossible it was to pursue any action with success upon an emergency, where they were to confederate, and consequently how much he was impeded by them in all his undertakings.

The 25th, an express (by way of Faro) arrived in five days from Gibraltar, with letters from the Prince of Hesse and Brigadier Shrimpton ; giving an account that they had powder in that garrison but for twelve days ; that the enemy had received a reinforcement of near 4000 French troops ; that there were above 900 sick men in the garrison, which had not above 2000 private men that could do duty ; that the enemy had brought their works within ten paces of the Round Tower which was very much shattered, and that they had made a breach above it, where thirty men could enter abreast ; and that the curtain and new battery were battered enough to enter at ; pressing therefore very much for a speedy supply of all sorts of ammunition. Further, that they had seen from Gibraltar Hill a squadron of ships with one Flag pass by that place to the westward.

Upon this occasion Sir John called a council of war the same day, and it was resolved to send the Leopard and Roebuck (being the only two ships that were clean and in a condition for the sea) directly to Gibraltar with 300 soldiers, and as



much powder and ordnance stores as they could take in ; but that they should in their way call at Tangier to inform themselves of the French having a squadron of ships before Gibraltar ; and if they had, they were to return to Lisbon and not run the hazard of being intercepted. And he gave these further directions to the commanders of those ships ; that if the French squadron should be in Gibraltar Bay, they were to hire a boat or vessel to take the powder and ordnance stores in, and by favour of the night convey them to Gibraltar. Likewise a few days after he dispatched a transport with powder and stores, giving them the like orders to proceed to Gibraltar under convoy of the *Tiger*. He likewise took this opportunity to send a chest of money to Mr. Jezreel Jones for the redemption of captives, pursuant to his instructions from Sir George Rooke ; but the powder which was to have been sent likewise, Sir John was obliged to make use of to supply the garrison of Gibraltar, besides all that could be spared out of the fleet. And finding that there had been greater promises made than he had orders to comply with, he wrote to Sir Cloudisley Shovell who was expected with the Grand Fleet from England, that he might bring with him what was necessary. Accordingly, when Sir Cloudisley arrived, that affair was adjusted, and the French protestant captives set at liberty.

In the meantime the equipment of the squadron was hastened with the utmost dispatch. But the Dutch declared their ships would not be in a condition to go to sea till they were careened, which was true ; for it was observed in their passage from Gibraltar that the heaviest of the transports sailed better than any of the Dutch

men-of-war, it having been two years since some of them had been cleaned. And most of them being sheathed, part thereof<sup>1</sup> was dropped off, and the rest hanging loose, [which] was a great hindrance to their sailing ; and this would have prevented all the success which followed, had Sir John kept them company, as in strictness they might have insisted upon.

I mentioned before<sup>2</sup> that a French ship from Cadiz, called the *John and William*, had arrived at Lisbon, with a letter from the French commissary at Cadiz and 150 English prisoners, pursuant to an agreement between the Marquis de Villadarias and Sir John Leake, when he was at Gibraltar, on his word of honour to set at liberty a like number of theirs at Lisbon. This Sir John had complied with on his part, having set that number of French and Spaniards at liberty a week before, with passports, to travel by land to their respective habitations ; and therefore, as soon as the ship arrived, to prevent the men getting on shore, he ordered all the English seamen from on board the French to the several ships of the squadron. This the Portuguese seemed offended at, alleging that he had taken them out of the French ship without their leave ; and on that pretence put the ship under an arrest. At this proceeding he was not a little surprised, and therefore immediately wrote to his Excellency Mr. Methuen, desiring him to enquire the cause of it ; for that he did not think himself obliged to ask any leave to take Her Majesty's subjects where he should find them, especially in the present case, where if he had not done it immediately, they would have been all on shore, and the

<sup>1</sup> Of the sheathing.

<sup>2</sup> Above, p. 245.

Service never the better, at a time when they had the utmost occasion for them. When Mr. Methuen had cleared up this particular, then they pretended there were several private letters from Cadiz brought in the ship for the French in those parts ; and though no proof of it appeared, yet under that pretext, the French commander, and likewise several English commanders of ships, were unjustly detained in prison and almost starved for want of provisions. The latter indeed after much solicitation were set at liberty ; but the former <sup>1</sup> were detained as prisoners contrary to the faith of nations ; and it was the more regretted by Sir John as he had promised them safe conduct by sea, in order to save the prisoners the fatigue of so long a march by land. All that could be done on his part he did ; for before he sailed from Lisbon, he sent his own and the Dutch Admiral's passes to the French commander, accompanied with a letter to the French Commissary. Of this and other barbarous treatment of the French prisoners by the Portuguese, the Commissary justly complained in his letter, sent by the next ship that came with prisoners to Lisbon. At length with great difficulty, the French commander obtained his liberty and returned to Cadiz.

Nor did Sir John labour under less difficulties from the court of Portugal with respect to supplies of all kinds, which as allies they were to furnish ; for every thing they could do to distress and disgrace us they did. On the other hand Sir John did not meet with that unanimity in his proceedings with the English Envoy, as might have been expected from a person in his station and [one]

<sup>1</sup> The French master of the John and William together with his ship's company.



on whose endeavours with the court of Portugal either the furtherance or delay of our naval affairs at Lisbon must in a great measure depend; though the blame might perhaps only fall upon the Admiral. Certain it is, the necessary supplies expected, and that ought to have been given by the Portuguese, was little or not at all complied with. And therefore it was the more surprising when the Admiral was informed by a letter from Mr. Methuen, as a complaint of the court of Portugal, that the refitting the squadron was not carried on with that vigour they expected, when in fact there was more expedition used than had ever been known at Lisbon. If there was indeed such a complaint, it was very ungrateful and very discouraging to Sir John; but it seems rather to have been made, or improved to a complaint, by the Envoy; and in this light he<sup>1</sup> took it. For in his answer, without regarding it in the least as a complaint of the court of Portugal, he addresses himself directly to the Ambassador. 'How easily your Excellency may imagine,' says he, 'ships can be cleaned, victualled and fitted, I cannot tell; but because you seem to be surprised that the ships are not ready, I shall only take leave to tell you, that I want no spur to forward me in my duty.'

The 9th of Februrary, the Greenwich was dispatched to convoy some vessels with ammunition of the King of Portugal's to Vianna do Castello<sup>2</sup> and Oporto. The 13th, the Newcastle, Centurion, and Swallow were careened, and completely ready to sail for Lagos to take in the soldiers for Gibraltar, but were prevented sailing for want of the provisions being sent on board, by

<sup>1</sup> Sir John Leake.

<sup>2</sup> 'Vienna,' author.

the neglect of the Agent Victualler. Which occasioned Sir John to send a reprimanding letter to him, telling him he was much concerned that the several messages he had sent him to hasten the provisions aboard the ships bound to Gibraltar was no better complied with. 'I don't know what you may believe the consequence,' says he, 'of stopping them twenty-four hours ; but it is my opinion, the preservation of Gibraltar may depend upon it.' Or else<sup>1</sup> he should not have given himself and him so much trouble as he had done to hasten them away. And as there was no want of boats to be hired to perform that service, so he could not see how he could excuse himself for so great a neglect. This letter however spurred him up, so that with much difficulty the provisions and stores were embarked, and the ships sailed the next day for Gibraltar.

The 15th, having ordered the Nottingham to be cleaned, he struck his flag there and hoisted it on board the Pembroke. Two days after in the evening, a Genoese settee arrived in five days from Gibraltar, giving an account that a squadron of nineteen sail of French ships had been seen standing from Cadiz to the southward, and that they were expected at Gibraltar. Upon this advice, Sir John put a stop to the Nottingham's cleaning and the rest of the ships ; and ordered the guns and provisions to be taken on board again, and the ships to be got ready with all expedition. But the Dutch were very backward, having but two ships cleaned and ready for service ; and two others cleaned, but would not be ready in less than five days ; and the Dutch Admiral's own ship having sprung her main mast

<sup>1</sup> Otherwise.

endeavouring to clean, it was impossible they could be ready in a reasonable time.

The day following the Leopard, Tiger, Garland and Lark (and five sail of victuallers that had been left behind at Gibraltar) arrived, having landed the powder, ordnance stores and soldiers, before they came, and left the Roebuck to attend the garrison ; bringing Sir John a letter from the Prince of Hesse, acknowledging the receipt of them ; and likewise desiring a quantity of dry provisions ; having of that sort [enough] left for two months, and [of] the other for three or thereabouts at short allowance for the men then in garrison.

The 21st at seven at night, he received another letter from his Highness, bearing date the 15th of February, N.S., acquainting him that Monsieur Pointis was come in there with fourteen men-of-war and two fireships that morning about ten o'clock ; so he hoped he would make all the haste he could to their relief, they <sup>1</sup> being resolved to try a general assault, which he hoped Sir John would prevent ; that the squadron lay as he did when he expected Monsieur Pointis there, at the west side of the bay, in the same place where his ship did ride.

Upon this advice, a council of war being called the next morning on board the Pembroke, it was resolved to be absolutely necessary to take some land-forces on board for the better manning of the English squadron (above 800 men short of their complement). Which being done, and a supply of ordnance stores (very much wanted) put on board, it was resolved, without a moment's loss of time, to proceed to their relief. For this end

<sup>1</sup> The enemy.



Sir John waited on the Ambassador and the Lord Galway, in order to get land-forces to make up the deficiency of their complements ; as also 600 barrels of powder, and a considerable quantity of ordnance stores, which could only be supplied out of the King of Portugal's magazines, that no time might be lost in the relief of Gibraltar. All this he obtained the promise of, and likewise of eight Portuguese men-of-war, four of which were then ready. With relation to the forces, soon after his first arrival at Lisbon he had acquainted the Portuguese and the Lord Galway that if he should be obliged to go to the relief of Gibraltar again, there would be a necessity of taking some land-forces on board for the better manning the ships ; and that, as soon as the service was over, he would put them into that garrison, as he intended to do now. But the Portuguese could not be prevailed upon to part with any of the English forces, till now this last advice of the danger of Gibraltar. And for the ordnance stores, all that could now be got from them was powder only, with match and canvas for cartridges. For the rest, Sir John was obliged to buy them up ashore as well as he could ; though the whole city would not furnish him with one half he had occasion for ; which was no small quantity, having supplied the garrison of Gibraltar, before they left that place, with all their musquetoons, the greatest part of their muskets, musket-shot, flints, cartouche-boxes, and other small stores in the squadron, and all their powder except twenty-five rounds each ship.

The same day the Newcastle, Centurion and Swallow arrived from Lagos, having, pursuant to their Instructions, taken on board the forces at that place to transport to Gibraltar. But upon

advice of the enemy's squadron in the Bay, it being impossible to proceed thither with the forces and stores they had on board for that garrison, they disembarked the troops again, and came directly to Lisbon.

There was one thing at this time, which at first gave Sir John some uneasiness and might have frustrated the whole expedition, if the court of Portugal had not been something more considerate and pliable than they had yet appeared upon any other occasion. I have mentioned above that the Portuguese had offered to join with the Confederates a squadron of eight sail of their men-of-war. Now by Articles XIX and XX of the treaty of Alliance, offensive and defensive, between the Emperor, the Queen of Great Britain, the King of Portugal, and the States General, it was provided that, whenever the auxiliary ships of the two maritime Powers upon any occasion joined those of Portugal, the Portuguese Commander-in-Chief was to command the whole.<sup>1</sup> Whether this was intended to take place upon any other occasion than of joining them with

<sup>1</sup> ARTICLE XIX. That all the auxiliary ships shall be subject to the King of Portugal's command, so as to perform what they are commanded by His Majesty ; and, if it happen that they are sent to the dominions and provinces belonging to Portugal beyond sea, they shall exercise what the King's Viceroy and Governors shall require of them in His Majesty's name.

ARTICLE XX. Whenever these auxiliary ships of the maritime Powers are upon any occasion to join with the Portuguese men-of-war, the commander of the Portuguese fleet or men-of-war shall make the signals and call the councils of war, which shall be had in the ship of the Portuguese commander and the said commander of the Portuguese fleet or men-of-war shall issue out the orders for the execution of what has been resolved in the council of war, which shall be executed accordingly by the commanders of the auxiliary ships.

some ships upon convoys or upon an expedition to their dominions beyond sea, I shall not particularly enquire ; but they seemed to understand it in the largest sense. Which Sir John being apprehensive of, and remembering what difficulties had attended all his applications to that Court by our Ambassador who was desirous beyond measure to please them in everything, and too much inclined to perplex him ; I say, these reflections gave him some uneasiness ; the success of the present expedition and consequently the fate of Gibraltar depending upon it. For if the Portuguese commanded, he must conduct it nevertheless, or all would be lost ; if he disputed the command, Gibraltar (which lay at his heart) might in the meantime be lost, and all the blame fall upon him. If he did not dispute the honour of his flag, he might be charged with betraying the honour of his country. It was not (considering former instances) without reason, if he thought it looked like a snare to bring him into a strait, unavoidably to err one way or the other ; or at least to dishonour the British flag by force of the treaty, which he was resolved to avoid if possible. It was prudent therefore to have his Excellency's sentiments upon it ; who perhaps might understand the meaning of those articles, and the sense of the ministry at home upon them better than himself. At least he was willing to think so.

He therefore wrote to Mr. Methuen, desiring to know of him what post the Portuguese men-of-war that were to go with the fleet expected, and were to have by the treaty ; that if it was to command in chief, in his opinion they had better be without them ; desiring his Excellency would settle that matter ; for he believed their being



mixed with our ships in the line of battle would be the only way to perform the service they were intended for. By this, he put the affair wholly upon the Envoy, resolving to be entirely governed by his opinion in it ; when, I conceive, he thought Sir John would act quite otherwise. By this means the business took a much happier turn than was at first or at least so suddenly expected ; upon the consideration, no doubt, of the ill consequences which must have attended any other measures. Besides, the Portuguese well knew their own incapacity to command in chief, being but ill-qualified to fight, or even to navigate their own ships. I am apt to think therefore, their own officers waived a command, which could serve only to show their presumption and render their ignorance more conspicuous, and probably be a means to frustrate the service they were to go upon. Wherefore they came into Sir John's own proposal ; and for that end, appointed only private captains to command their ships, that they might be incorporated into the line with the English. But though the Portuguese agreed to this method, it was done as a concession ; and by not appointing a Portuguese admiral to command their ships under the English flag, it showed plainly, they understood they were empowered by the Articles of the treaty to command the whole ; and that it was so meant and intended to be at the ratification of the treaty. It will be no salve to our honour to say the Portuguese never actually asserted this command at sea over our flag, and a much poorer shift to pretend that the Articles were so loosely worded as to admit of dispute.

The 25th, Sir John re-hoisted his flag on board the Nottingham. The next day the Greenwich

with some merchant ships from Vianna do Castello and Oporto arrived, as did the following day Sir Thomas Dilkes from England with the *Revenge*, *Warspight*, *Bedford*, *Expedition* and *Hampton Court*, and a fleet of merchant ships, victuallers and shoreships. By Sir Thomas Dilkes, Sir John received a commission from His Royal Highness, appointing him Vice-Admiral of the White Squadron of Her Majesty's fleet, and commander-in-chief of Her Majesty's fleet in the Mediterranean. Accordingly he struck the blue flag on board the *Nottingham*, and hoisted the white flag at the fore topmast-head the 1st of March, on board the *Hampton Court*, a Third Rate of 70 guns. The following day he held a council of war, wherein it was resolved that the transportation of the Portugal forces at Lagos designed for Gibraltar should be deferred till they had relieved that place; and that it was for Her Majesty's service that the reinforcement of ships expected from England be ordered to proceed after them. The same day in the afternoon the Dutch regiment was embarked on board the fleet, and the 600 barrels of gunpowder were delivered from the King of Portugal's magazine. The 3rd, he weighed and run out into the bay of Oeiras, and was saluted by the Portuguese commodore with seven guns; but several of the squadron could not follow him. The next day he issued out the line of battle and rendez-vous, with particular directions for the fleet's going into Gibraltar Bay if they should surprise the enemy there, viz., that if they had intelligence that the enemy were in Gibraltar Bay and the wind westerly, they were to sail in a line of battle abreast of each other, after they were past Tangier till they got near the length of Cape Cabarita; and if the enemy

should be at an anchor on the west side the bay [so] that they could not weather them, the ship that led with the starboard tacks was, as soon as she got the length of the said cape, to spring her luff and endeavour to get ahead of them, every ship following in a line ahead of each other, till the van got ahead of the innermost ship; and then to make the signal for tacking and to tack accordingly; and as soon as he was about, he was to lay his head sails to the mast, every ship astern doing the same, observing to tack when the ship ahead tacked; and to endeavour all that was possible to annoy the enemy by either laying them athwart the hawse, or otherwise boarding them before they could set their sails; which method was to be observed if they cut or slipped, if any advantage was to be gained before they could form their line of battle.

The same day part of the English regiment embarked; and the English Ambassador and my Lord Galway came on board the Hampton Court to wish Sir John a good voyage. The 5th, the rest of the English regiment being embarked, he weighed with the fleet and endeavoured to sail, but it proved so calm he was obliged to anchor again. However, the following day he sailed with the whole fleet under his command, consisting of 35 sail of the line, viz. 23 English, eight Portuguese, and four Dutch; the place of rendez-vous being four or five leagues west from Cape Spartel; and if Sir John should not be there nor any orders at Tangier to the contrary, to proceed directly to Gibraltar. At the same time the Newcastle was ordered to proceed before to Lagos to take on board Mr. Methuen. The 8th, Sir John drew the fleet into a line of battle to try how the Portuguese would behave, who



indeed answered his expectation, he being obliged to bring to for half an hour, to give them time to get into the line ; which must have produced fatal consequences had it been to proceed upon action, as he expected very shortly to do. The next day at noon, being got in sight of Cape Spartel, he detached the Tiger and Leopard before him to Tangier for intelligence of the enemy ; and finding he had not day enough to reach Gibraltar, he lay by that night, to prevent being discovered from the Spanish shore, that he might surprise the enemy in the bay early the next morning.

The weather continued fair till after midnight. Then the wind flew from W.N.W. to S.W. with much rain and thick weather, which hindered his making sail so soon as he intended. But towards morning, as the day appeared, he found he was within three leagues of Cape Cabarita. Hereupon he made the signal for the fleet to bear away in a line of battle. But the Leopard, whom he had sent to Tangier for intelligence, coming into the fleet, acquainted him there was only twelve sail of the enemy's ships in the bay ; upon which he ordered the fleet to chase, and at half an hour past five, being within a league of Cape Cabarita, discovered only five sail making out of the bay ; and a gun being fired at them from Europa Point, Sir John concluded the garrison was safe and gave chase to them. They proved to be the *Magnanime* of 74 guns, the *Lys Vaisseau* of 88, the *Ardent* of 66, the *Arrogant* of 60, and the *Marquis* of 56.

At first they made for the Barbary shore, but finding our ships gained upon them, they stood for the Spanish shore. At nine o'clock Sir Thomas Dilkes in the *Revenge*, with the New-

castle, Antelope, Expedition and a Dutch man-of-war got within half gunshot of the Arrogant, and after very little resistance she struck ; the Newcastle's boat getting first on board her. The rest of the ships leaving her in the possession of the Newcastle, followed the chase of the other four. Soon after the Warspight, Canterbury, Leopard, and the Dutch Rear-Admiral engaged the Lys ; and as others came to their assistance, the three former stretched ahead and engaged the other three of the enemy's ships. About half an hour past ten, Sir John got alongside the Lys, within pistol-shot, and engaged her with his guns double-shotted, till he shot ahead, his fore-yard being unluckily shot in two just by the slings ; so that there was no trimming the head sails otherwise than they stood ; having received no other damage, but three men killed and one wounded. But the wind being but two points on the quarter, the misfortune did not hinder him from following the other three, where was the greatest want of ships to prevent their running ashore ; there being then only four ships ahead of him, and he made no doubt but there was enough astern to take care of the Lys.

Within an hour and half he got within gunshot of the Magnanime, commanded by the Baron Pointis ; but she run ashore with such force, that all her masts came by the board as soon as she struck ; only her hull from the taffrail to the midships remaining above water. But he had the opportunity, before she run ashore, of giving her a broadside or two, which killed and wounded a great many men ; and amongst the latter Baron Pointis himself ; of which, and the disappointment, he died shortly after. Soon after this, Sir John got within pistol-shot of the Ardent ; at

the same time that a Dutch man-of-war sheering along her side, entered his men and turned her from the shore so timely, that the French ship's stern touched the ground ; but the way she had filled her sails the other way, so that she got off again. The other ship taken by the Dutch was the Marquis.

Whilst all this was doing, the rest of the ships which were astern kept plying the three-decked ship the *Lys* ; which made such confusion, that it was thought our own shot did more mischief than the enemy's, nor was it possible to be regulated ; having such fresh way, there was no sending a boat with orders. When she run ashore Sir John was about two miles to the eastward of her ; and for half an hour before, she was so disabled in her sails and rigging and made so little resistance, that if any ship had laid her aboard, she would have yielded ; which Sir John (in his letter to the Admiralty upon this engagement) observes to have been so general a fault in the captains of the ships that engaged, he could not tell who to blame ; the captains excusing themselves, that either they were prevented by other ships, or were so much disabled in their rigging, that they could not command their own ; though it was thought the chiefest reason was, they expected every minute she would yield, or her masts come by the board ; and indeed it was a miracle they stood.

As for the Portuguese, those that durst get anything near, fired their guns with so little judgment, that they did more harm than good ; and one of them mistaking the *Pembroke* for the *Lys*, gave her a broadside, but did little damage. If Sir John had happened to have been two or three leagues farther from the land, it would have been



impossible for any of them to have run ashore ; or if his own ship had not been so unluckily disabled, the *Lys* had certainly been taken ; which however might have been done notwithstanding, had our ships performed their orders as well as the Dutch ; which was, to take the enemy by laying them athwart the hawse, or otherwise by boarding them. But how ill these orders were performed has been sufficiently explained. As to the Baron Pointis' ship the *Magnanime*, it was almost impossible to prevent her going ashore, few of our ships being able to come up with her.

The place where these two ships ran ashore was upon the coast of Spain near Marbella.

After the engagement Sir John, having repaired the damage he had received and made a shift to get farther off the shore, ordered some ships in to endeavour to burn the *Lys*, and what was left of the other ; but the enemy prevented them, by setting them on fire that evening themselves. He likewise ordered the *Tiger* away to Gibraltar with the agreeable news of his success. The rest of the enemy's ships that were at Gibraltar were drove from their anchors some days before, and it was believed were in Malaga Road. Wherefore he looked in there, and at the same time forced ashore and burnt a French merchant ship of 300 tons ; but the men-of-war which had put in there, having heard the firing when he engaged the other five, thought that was no secure harbour, and cutting their cables, made the best of their way to Toulon. The 15th, Sir John ordered the *Canterbury* and *Swallow* to take on board 400 soldiers, and carry them to Gibraltar to reinforce the garrison. At the same time he detached the *Lark* to cruise off Velez Malaga to look for a French

flyboat, which he was informed was coming from Toulon laden with ordnance stores for the camp before Gibraltar.

The wind continuing westerly, and for some days very bad weather, drove the fleet as high as Roquetas, where they anchored 48 hours, and in that time were joined by the Centurion, Leopard and Lark from their cruise, and likewise by the Expedition and Panther, who had chased ashore and burnt near Cape de Gata a French ship of 30 guns, bound for the West Indies ; and the Assurance and Bedford took two settees. Sir John put to sea again, but by reason of the contrary winds could not reach Gibraltar till the 31st of March, having been joined in his passage two days before by the Kent, Orford and Eagle from England. He had no sooner anchored in Gibraltar Bay, but His Highness the Prince of Hesse sent him the following letter.

SIR,—I expected with great impatience this good opportunity to express my hearty joy of your great and good success you had at this your second appearing off this place ; which I hope hath been the final stroke towards our relief ; the enemy since five days having begun to withdraw their heavy cannon ; being the effects only to be ascribed to your good conduct and care : it is only to you the public owes and will owe so many great and happy consequences of it : and I in particular cannot enough express my hearty thanks and obligations I lie under, &c.

I am with great sincerity and respect, &c.

GEORGE, PRINCE OF HESSE.

His Highness had likewise provided a gold cup against Sir John's arrival, which he presented him as a token of his gratitude and esteem for his person and services, till it should be in his power to acknowledge it by something better worth

his acceptance. It is certain the Prince had contracted a great esteem for Sir John by the friendships which had passed between them during this siege ; and had his power been equal to his generous spirit, he would have thought no favours too great to have conferred upon him.

Thus, when the French court expected to hear of the reduction of Gibraltar according to the promises of the Marshal de Tessé, they were very much surprised to receive an account of Monsieur Pointis' disgrace in a letter from himself, dated from Marbella the 22nd of March, N.S., 'It was my good fortune,' says he, 'that the bad weather separated so many ships from me. Otherwise the more I had had, the more I had lost. Those that abuse the King's name, and wrote and caused others to write to me that I should not be afraid, nor suffer myself to be ruled by the motives of vain fears, will perhaps be more astonished than myself at the ruin of the squadron, the loss of which they cannot hinder from being imputed to themselves.' The Marshal de Tessé being afraid that Monsieur Pointis would lay that misfortune at his door, did not fail to write to the court to justify the conduct of that admiral. 'It is very true,' says he, 'the Baron de Pointis has often solicited me to give him leave to return to Toulon ; but the orders I had from your Majesty and his own imported that we should conform ourselves to the will of the Catholic King. The Council of Spain strenuously opposed the retreat of our ships. Express orders were sent to me from Madrid to detain them in the bay. The Baron de Pointis complained of it, and protested against it, well foreseeing what would follow ; and being very diligent and vigilant, he took all possible precautions to secure himself from being



surprised by the enemy. Notwithstanding which, the enemy advanced without being discovered, either by the scouts that cruised at the mouth of the Straits or by the sentinels posted on the coast, and on the neighbouring towers, and surprised your Majesty's ships, &c. And after this unhappy accident, seeing the place was supplied anew with refreshments and all other things, I gave orders for an entrenchment to be made; and I dispatched the engineer Renaud, to represent to your Majesty, as also [to] the Catholic King, the impossibility of continuing the siege. The troops are fatigued, a great many sick, and ammunition begins to be wanted; and I have received advice from Malaga that the enemy's squadron is before Ceuta, and has some design against that place, &c.'

Besides the apprehensions they were under for Ceuta, this blow struck such a terror all along the whole coast that their fear suggested the fleet to be at every place at once: and Mr. Hill, Her Majesty's Envoy at the Court of Savoy, in his letter to Sir John upon this occasion, gives the following account. 'I can tell you,' says he, 'your late success against Monsieur Pointis put all the French coast into great disorder and consternation, as if you were come to scour the whole Mediterranean. All the ships of war that were in the road of Toulon hauled into the harbour, and nothing durst look out in some days.' About the same time he likewise received a letter of congratulation from the Earl of Galway.

But to return to the besiegers, who now (as the Marshal de Tessé in his letter plainly declared) gave over all hopes of carrying the place; and to the fleet who arrived at Gibraltar (as I said) the 31st of March. That day the town fired

briskly upon the enemy with cannon and mortars, which, as deserters informed them, killed a great many of their men. The 1st of April the town continued their fire very smartly. In the evening Sir John caused all the boats of the fleet to be armed, and part of them were ordered to cut down a crane the enemy had set up to weigh the guns of the French frigates, which were run ashore and burnt when he relieved the place the first time ; which service was performed without any loss. The rest of the boats rowed to other places to alarm their camp ; whereupon all their forces were drawn together, and a considerable body advanced to the seaside to oppose their landing.

The next day a council was held on shore to consider whether they should make a sally, but it was resolved in the negative ; chiefly, because if they should miscarry, it would encourage the enemy and weaken the garrison ; that as the place was in no danger of being taken, they would spend their ammunition and daily perish in their trenches ; and because they would not <sup>1</sup> drive them too suddenly from before the place, that diversion being very favourable to the Confederate army in Portugal to march into Spain. Upon this occasion the Prince wrote to Sir John, desiring the fleet might remain as long as possible, hoping in two or three days the enemy would leave the siege and turn it into a blockade. Whereupon it was resolved in a council of war the 3rd instant to remain there till the 6th, and then return to Lisbon to refit and victual for the summer's expedition ; and in the meantime, if the garrison should be disposed to make a sally, they would give the utmost assistance with their boats to

<sup>1</sup> Sc. And because it would be a mistake to . . .

divert the enemy, and by putting three or four hundred men into the town to man the batteries during the action. But, the fleet being but weakly manned, they thought it too hazardous to land men without the town; and <sup>1</sup> that they would send on shore all the land-forces they brought from Lisbon before they sailed.

The next day he received another letter from His Highness, acquainting him that the countenance of the fleet continuing in the bay made the enemy continue to draw off their guns, so that there was only twelve left and one mortar, which he hoped in three nights more, by his staying there, might be removed; and desiring that the Portuguese forces at Lagos might be brought thither as soon as possible. Whereupon at a council of war it was resolved to detach five frigates out of the fleet to perform that service. The same day, by a deserter, they were informed the enemy were drawing off their cannon. The 5th, the Marshal de Tessé wrote to the Admiral, desiring the prisoners taken in the French ships; but the sick and wounded only were sent back. The rest Sir John promised the Marshal, when some English seamen, prisoners in several parts of Spain and very ill treated, were set at liberty.

After this the siege was entirely raised, and the enemy marched off, leaving only a detachment at some distance to observe the garrison. Thus the siege of that important place, after near six months' toil and fruitless attempts, was at last raised by the obstinate and valiant defence of our brave English troops, under the conduct of the indefatigable and courageous Prince of Hesse Darmstadt and by the seasonable relief, which was

<sup>1</sup> Promising however.



from time to time given them by the Confederate fleet, under the command of Sir John Leake. A French writer <sup>1</sup> observes, that the unsuccessful siege of Gibraltar made the Spaniards sensible how important that post was, and how dear they were to pay for their neglect in preserving it. It was this in particular (says he) which obliged the Duke of Berwick to stand upon the defensive, and hindered him from pursuing his conquests.

The loss the enemy sustained may easily be computed, if we observe that four French battalions that were before that place were reduced to 1000 men, and their fourteen companies of Grenadiers, which arrived in the camp some days before the Marshal de Tessé took the command of the army and made 700 effective men, to 350; and two-thirds of the officers were either killed or died of sickness. The Walloon guards of 1300 men were reduced to 400. The French marines, which consisted of 2000 effective men in the beginning of the siege, to 500; and all of them in a languishing condition, by reason of the long siege, and the badness of the weather. And the Spaniards, who were about 9000, lost very near two-thirds of that number; by which it appears, the loss of the enemy could be little less than 10,000 men; whereas the loss of the besieged did not exceed 1200, either killed or by sickness. And by sea their loss was in proportion; for of ours, they only had the good fortune to surprise one of the transports, and to destroy the Terror bomb in the Old Mole. But of theirs were destroyed and taken, one ship of 86 guns, one of 74, one of 66, one of 56, two of 36, one of 30, two of 24, and

<sup>1</sup> *Life of the Duke of Berwick* (from the French) (London. 8vo. 1738), p. 249.

one of 16, besides merchant ships and smaller vessels, and above 500 men killed, and 1200 taken prisoners.

Whilst the fleet continued at Gibraltar, the weather was so bad that all the Portuguese, the Dutch Admiral, and several of the English ships were drove from their anchors, and some of them were forced to sea. Whereupon, the 1st of April, the Portuguese returned to Lisbon; and the Swallow, having lost all her anchors, was ordered thither. The Tiger was detached to Lagos with letters, and the Lark upon the like service to Tangier; the latter of which had orders to join the fleet again off Cape Spartel. Sir John stayed at the Prince of Hesse's desire till the 6th of April, and then sailed for Lisbon; where he arrived the 12th, with the three French men-of-war taken in the late engagement; having left Rear-Admiral Dilkes and seven sail with orders to cruise off the Rock of Lisbon for six days, to look for four sail of French, that were said to cruise off that place; and having likewise dispatched the Panther, Leopard, Tiger, Charles Galley, Garland and Swallow Prize to Lagos, to transport 1000 Portuguese soldiers from thence to Gibraltar, (pursuant to the Prince's desire and the resolution of the council of war thereupon) with orders, when they had performed that service, to return to Lisbon; except the Swallow Prize, which, with the Flamborough, was appointed to attend that garrison.

This was the happy conclusion of a very long and troublesome affair, conducted with great judgment and resolution on the part of the Confederates; and with equal obstinacy and resentment on the side of the enemy. It was no less honourable and advantageous to the former

than disgraceful and disadvantageous to the latter, after they had vowed to sacrifice all to the retaking Gibraltar. This vain resolution, no doubt, the Grand Monarque was prompted to make, to wipe off the disgrace of their wretched politics, in suffering that important place to become so easy a conquest, and which, besides the dishonour that attended it, was losing the most advantageous post (except Cadiz) of the Kingdom of Spain : and consequently the most important to us, by putting us in possession of this mistress of the Mediterranean and key of Spain, than which nothing could be more beneficial or glorious to the British nation. The taking of Gibraltar was certainly a brave enterprise, but will bear no comparison with that of preserving it afterwards. It was an easy matter for the grand Confederate fleet to surprise the place at a disadvantage with a small garrison. But to preserve that same town with a small squadron under all possible disadvantages against the united force of France and Spain, by land and sea, was an act of the most consummate skill and bravery. This could not have been effected but by the mutual endeavours and harmony of those two brave and vigilant officers, the Prince of Hesse and Sir John Leake. It is true the Prince had some English officers about him, brave in the highest degree ; but there were others of opinion from the first to give up the place as not tenable ; and indeed, considering there were conspiracies within for the same purpose, nothing but the indefatigable pains and brave resolution, with which the Prince and some few of the officers and their brave marines mutually inspired each other, could have made it defensible. But the fleet both did and suffered still more than all this. For the



soldiers were but men. They could not have repaired the breaches, made new works, and defended the old, had they not been continually assisted by the seamen from the ships, who were their pioneers, their artificers, their carpenters, their gunners, and their fellow soldiers, and the ships their magazines and store-houses. Besides, as their marines were part of the ships' companies, in that respect almost the whole may be attributed to the fleet. But moreover, the ships' companies greatly suffered by want of provision, which the garrison did not. And besides their portions of labour with the garrison, they had their particular fatigues, by bad weather, and being short of their complements of men in every ship ; and by their labours to refit the squadron at Lisbon to proceed thither : all which may at least be esteemed equal to the fatigues of the garrison. And as the actions of every member proceed from the head ; so in like manner Sir John Leake had the weight of all this upon himself. It is true, the Prince (not to lessen his labours) had the enemy always before him, and the preservation and defence of the town always in his mind. But these cares were circumscribed by the walls of the place. He could contribute nothing to their relief, and therefore had only to think how to defend themselves to the utmost ; and having done that, though the place should be lost, he had done all [that] could be expected from him. But with regard to Sir John, the whole care and preservation of the place depended upon him. It was from him only their relief could be expected, and his reputation depended upon it. And what fatigues and difficulties did he overcome to accomplish it ! He wanted everything necessary to further him ; and all, that should have assisted

him, prevented and perplexed him. His own credit was all the means to procure him everything he wanted, and his reputation at stake for the event. We have few such instances in the English history. We have hardly had an instance where the sea- and land-officers have agreed together in any expedition ; but none where an admiral and a general have agreed like the Prince and Sir John ; who sacrificed all private views and passions, with a disinterested regard, and steadfast perseverance for the public good. No difficulties, no dangers, no fatigues, no advantages, no punctilios could disunite them. But they acted as by a sympathy of nature, arising from a like generosity and bravery of mind. It was this that crowned their endeavours with a glorious success, which will be remembered whilst Gibraltar remains a part of the British possessions ; and that (it is to be hoped) will be as long as trade and navigation continue to flourish, and the power of the British navy can maintain that conquest.

## CHAPTER IX<sup>1</sup>

*Transactions at Lisbon till the arrival of the Grand Fleet. They proceed with the King of Spain and land-forces to Barcelona, which is besieged and taken. Whereupon the fleet returns to England, leaving Sir John with a squadron abroad.*

THE vigorous defence of Gibraltar, as it obliged the French and Spaniards to draw most of their forces that way, gave the allies the opportunity in the spring campaign to take Valenza de Alcantara by storm, and Alburquerque by capitulation, within the compass of two months. All this while the Grand Fleet, with the English and Dutch recruits, were preparing in England to come to Portugal under command of the Earl of Peterborough and Sir Clowdisley Shovell, who had been appointed Joint Admiral of the fleet for that purpose<sup>2</sup>; and they sailed from Spithead the 24th of May. What could induce our ministers to put a landsman (I won't say a soldier) in conjunction with the Admiral in chief to command the fleet, is not very easy to determine. It might answer some particular private end, but could have no tendency to promote the good

<sup>1</sup> The period covered by this chapter extends from 12th April to 14th October, 1705.

<sup>2</sup> The sentence should doubtless read, 'Under command of Sir Clowdisley Shovell and the Earl of Peterborough, who had been appointed Joint Admiral of the fleet for that purpose.'



of the common cause. The best construction is that they meant thereby to render the proceedings of the fleet and army more unanimous. But, contrariwise, it was the most opposite to produce that effect. If his Lordship assumed the command of the fleet, he must neglect the land service ; the operations of the one being so very opposite to, and distant from, the other upon many occasions. Besides, it would be acting in a sphere he was wholly unacquainted with : in which case it was most likely the Admirals would leave all to him, or agree to nothing with him from a resentment which may be naturally supposed on such an occasion. So that it put it in the power of his Lordship to prejudice the public service one way or other, without a possibility of promoting it. And it had the certain consequence to disoblige the whole fleet by placing an unqualified person over them, but more especially a land-officer. If it had no ill consequence therefore but disgusting our brave admirals and seamen, who had done so much, and from whom so much more was necessary to the conquest of Spain, that alone should have prevailed beyond any other consideration. And if the inconveniences attending this proceeding had not the fatal consequences which might have been expected, it was more owing to the virtue of our admirals abroad than the politics of our ministers at home.

Whilst this was doing in England, Sir John was busy at Lisbon, dispatching of convoys, and getting his squadron in a readiness for the summer's expedition, against the arrival of the Grand Fleet. The 21st of April, he ordered the Monk and Centurion for Vianna, Oporto and Figuéira da Foz to bring the trade to Lisbon ;

and the same day the *Leopard* with the rest of the men-of-war from Lagos arrived, having transported the Portuguese forces to Gibraltar according to their orders. The next day the *Newcastle*, *Greenwich* and *Gloucester* were dispatched with 27 sail of merchant ships bound to Virginia and the West Indies, with orders to see them 150 leagues into the sea. Soon after, the *Lark* arrived from Tangier. The 25th, Sir John detached the *Kent*, *Orford* and *Antelope* to cruise off of the *Burlings* for six days. The next day the convoy with the *Vianna* and *Oporto* trade arrived at Lisbon ; as on the 30th did a transport with about two hundred English prisoners that had been sent to Cadiz some time before, with a letter from the French Commissary, complaining of the ill-treatment of the French prisoners by the Portuguese, and particularly of the master of the *John* and *William* before-mentioned.

Whilst he was thus employed in securing the coast and protecting the trade by cruisers and convoys, a packet arrived from England the 3rd of May, bringing him a letter from Mr. Secretary Hedges (dated the 17th of April) enclosing some letters of intelligence of the preparations of the French ; importing that there were nine large ships at Brest ready to sail for Toulon, besides six of 50 and 60 guns ; and six more, from 40 to 50, from St. Malo, and 1500 seamen arrived for manning them. That there were at Toulon, twelve sail, from 106 to 90, six of 70, and 12 of 60 guns, besides frigates. Accompanying these was a letter from Mr. Clarke, His Highness the Lord High Admiral's secretary, recommending it to him from His Highness to prevent the junction of the East and West France squadrons, if he should find himself in a condition to do it ; to

which purpose 17 sail were sailed from Spithead to come and strengthen him.

Upon this advice, Sir John took the opinion of a council of war the next day; and it was resolved and agreed that they were not strong enough at present, or otherwise in a condition, to oppose and hinder the junction of the fleets of East and West France; naval stores being wanted; several ships of the squadron having their guns and stores out in order to be cleaned; others refitting and some at sea; and the Dutch victualled but for three weeks: but that when the ships should arrive from England and Ireland, they would come to a further resolution. In the meantime the refitting the ships was carried on with the greatest dispatch, to be ready against the arrival of the expected reinforcement.

The 6th, Sir John fell down into the Bay of Oeiras with ten sail of English and two of Dutch and a fireship; the rest being refitting and under orders to clean. The following day the Newcastle, Greenwich and Gloucester arrived, having seen their convoy as directed; and the day after, the Monk and Centurion with the Vianna and Oporto trade. In this interval inquiry was made into some misdemeanours that had been committed; and for that purpose a court martial was held the 12th, wherein the boatswain and purser of the Gloucester were tried, and dismissed the service for drunkenness and neglect of duty; and the second lieutenant of the Expedition was fined two months' pay. At the same time two men were convicted and condemned to be hanged for sodomy; which sentence was executed upon them soon after.

The 14th, the packet from England arrived,



bringing letters from Mr. Secretary Hedges, confirming the former advices; that the French fleet from Brest were ready to put to sea, and of the forwardness of the squadron of ships at Rochefort, whose design seemed to be to pass the Straits. The 18th, the Essex, Rupert, Edgar, Berwick and Falcon arrived from Ireland, with thirty sail of transports with horses. Whereupon Sir John called a council of war the following day to consider further of Mr. Secretary Hedges's letter. But the council resolved to remain at Lisbon till they should be reinforced or receive further advice; the ships not being in a condition to go into a proper station to intercept the enemy, by reason of the shortness of provisions, and being weakly and sickly manned. The 23rd, the Pembroke, Garland and Charles Galley were ordered to cruise for twenty-one days off of the Southward Cape; and the day after four hundred sail of merchant ships were dispatched to England, under convoy of the Swiftsure and five sail more. But two of them, viz., the Swallow and Roebuck, were only to see them clear of the coast and then return. A few days after, Prince Lichtenstein<sup>1</sup> paid Sir John a visit, and at his going on shore was saluted with thirteen guns.

During this time the Grand Confederate Fleet were at sea on their way to Lisbon from England and Holland; and the 3rd of June, Admiral Allemonde with fourteen sail of Dutch men-of-war, two fireships, two bombs, and 62 sail of transports and merchant ships arrived; and the 9th following, the Swallow and three sail more, having the Lord Peterborough on board

<sup>1</sup> Minister of the English candidate to the throne of Spain, Charles Archduke of Austria, styled in these pages the 'King.' See Introduction.

who hoisted the Union flag, and was soon followed by Sir Clowdisley Shovell with the Fleet, wherein was the Prince George, Sir John's former ship, which had been sent<sup>1</sup> to England at the conclusion of the last campaign, under the necessity of a thorough repair by reason of the great damage she had received in the Malaga engagement, with an intention to rehoist his flag on board that ship when she returned, which accordingly he did the 13th instant.

The Grand Confederate Fleet being thus united at Lisbon, a council of war was held the 15th of June, at which were present the Earl of Peterborough and Sir Clowdisley Shovell, Joint Admirals, Sir Stafford Fairborne, Sir John Leake, Sir Thomas Dilkes, and four Dutch Admirals. And it was determined that, since the land-forces from Ireland were not arrived, nor those which Portugal was to furnish in a readiness, they would put to sea with about 46 or 48 sail of the line, English and Dutch, and place themselves in such a station between Cape Spartel, and the Bay of Cadiz, as might best prevent the junction of the French ships from Toulon and Brest, until the arrival of those from Ireland; but not to go into the Straits, if it could be possibly avoided. The 18th, in the afternoon, His Majesty the King of Spain and the Prince of Brazil took a view of the fleet, going on board the Britannia, and were attended by each ship's barge with an officer at their coming and returning, and were four times saluted by every ship with fifteen guns each time, and the flag-ships spreading out their colours. Two days after this, a council of war was held of the English Flag Officers only, where

<sup>1</sup> Sc. Which he had sent.

it was agreed not to be advisable to detach any ships, in regard the fleet was proceeding on action, and that there was a probability of the junction of the enemy's ships of the Ocean and Mediterranean.

The 22nd, the fleet sailed to cruise off Cape Spartel, till the Lord Peterborough should join them with the King of Spain ; and just without the bar they met the convoy from Ireland. The 26th, the Leopard having the Prince of Hesse on board came into the fleet, but soon after proceeded to Lisbon. In the meantime the fleet continued cruising on their station, without affording any remarkable occurrence. July the 20th, they were joined by a transport ship, that came out in company with the Lord Peterborough ; but his Lordship, with the men-of-war and King Charles proceeded for Gibraltar, where His Majesty first took possession of the Kingdom of Spain, and then sailed to join the fleet. The 25th, his Lordship in the Ranelagh, with the King of Spain on board, and most of the ships from Gibraltar joined the fleet ; and the next day His Majesty removed on board the Britannia. The 30th, the fleet came to an anchor in Altea Bay, in order to water ; and the marines were landed for that purpose to protect them. But so far from meeting with any opposition, the inhabitants came and offered their service to His Catholic Majesty, imploring his protection. They brought all sorts of refreshments and provisions, and were very well paid for them.

Whilst the fleet was in the bay, certain advice was brought that there were in the adjacent mountains 800 or 1000 of the inhabitants of the towns and places in the neighbourhood, who being weary of the French yoke, had declared for King



Charles, and secured the town of Denia, not far from the bay. Whereupon His Catholic Majesty appointed Major-General Basset-y-Ramos, (who had served under the Prince of Hesse in the siege of Gibraltar) to be governor of that place, sending with him about 400 men for its security. The 2nd and 3rd of August the wind blew very hard at east, which prevented their sailing. However the 5th they sailed, steering for Barcelona. But His Majesty thought fit to detach the Prince of Hesse Darmstadt before, with two frigates, to enquire into the posture of affairs in those parts, and of the strength of the city. His Highness accordingly proceeded before, and put into Mataró, four leagues distant from Barcelona; where having informed himself of what he thought necessary, and encouraged the people at Vich, who had declared for King Charles, he came away in order to rejoin the fleet. But they met with so many calms, that it was the 11th instant before they arrived in that bay.

The city of Barcelona, the capital of Catalonia and one of the most ancient and flourishing cities of Spain, is situated in a plain, near the sea side, having a mole, within which only galleys and small ships can enter. It is fortified round with ten bastions and some old towers; the ditch in some parts not very deep, and the covered way not quite finished. The castle and citadel, which is called Montjuich, is built upon a hill on the west side, commands the city, and is not commanded by any ground thereabouts. The coast along the shore is level, very fruitful and well cultivated; being watered with many rivers and rills from the neighbouring mountains, all full of villages and towns.

As soon as the fleet had anchored in the bay,

they <sup>1</sup> began to fire from the mole and a battery near the sea upon the transport ships that stood in for the shore; but to little purpose. For they all anchored in such a manner as they found most commodious for landing the soldiers on board them. But the wind being easterly and beginning to blow hard, made so great a sea, that it was impossible for them to get on shore that day. In the meantime, Don Francisco de Velasco, Viceroy of Catalonia and as such commander-in-chief in Barcelona, gave orders to burn all the straw and forage in the country and villages for a league round the city; notwithstanding which precaution, there was found enough remaining for all the horse the fleet brought. The next day the foot were landed, though not without some difficulty, the sea running very high; so that in some places the soldiers were up to their middles in water. They landed about three-quarters of a league from the city, near a river called Basoz on the east side between the town and a place called Badalona, without any opposition. And it was so ordered that the boats at every turn carried near 3000 men; so that in a little more than five hours there were fifteen battalions of foot on shore. The 13th, the dragoons and part of the horse were landed and joined the rest of the forces, encamped about a quarter of a league from the city in a place well fortified by nature; extending itself on the left near the sea, and covered on the right by the river Secchia, and defended on the rear by the river Basoz and divers hills and defiles.

The 15th, Sir Clowdisley Shovell advised with the English Flag Officers (at the Lord Peterborough's desire) whether the money for paying

<sup>1</sup> The enemy.

the short allowance to the fleet might not be made use of to pay the Catalans for their service in carrying on the siege of Barcelona ; which was agreed to. The 17th, His Majesty went on shore to encourage the expedition by his presence, and show himself to the people of the country. At his going from on board, the whole fleet saluted him ; and at the water side he was met by an infinite number of people from the adjacent towns and villages with repeated cries of ' Long live the King ! ' ; casting themselves at his feet with a thousand demonstrations of joy. And being arrived at the camp, he was received by a treble discharge of small arms of the forces, who were drawn in a line to receive him.

The first council of war of Generals, was the 16th of August, O.S., when the siege was judged impracticable, *nemine contradicente*. The 19th, at a council of Admirals, the Lord Peterborough acquainted them that the land Generals were unanimous of opinion not to attempt Barcelona, but were mighty desirous they should carry them to Italy. Whereupon the Flag Officers had recourse to their Instructions ; which being read, they were of opinion [that] they intended chiefly the attempting Barcelona and Cadiz ; and, if they found not a suitable return from the Catalans, that even then they were to endeavour the reduction of other places on the coast of Spain ; and that if any troops could be spared from services in Spain, it would be highly acceptable if they could be engaged in any service for the good of the Duke of Savoy. And therefore they came to a resolution unanimously to attempt something, though with hazard, as they had landed the troops at Barcelona.

This was a very early attempt to influence the fleet by means of land councils from the service



of the King of Spain, for which they were principally designed; and a flagrant instance of the folly, if not treachery, in appointing the Lord Peterborough Joint Admiral. But it was very happy the Sea Admirals were so honest to be governed by their own councils; wherein they constantly showed a zeal for the interest of His Catholic Majesty.

The 22nd, his Lordship held a council of war of Generals upon a letter from His Catholic Majesty that day. Which having weighed, and (according to His Majesty's desire) had a second consideration of their own circumstances and that of the garrison, an attack was proposed and passed in the negative; the Lord Peterborough alone being for the affirmative, and giving his reason for it, so full of dutiful and affectionate expressions to His Catholic Majesty, that are no ways to be reconciled with his proceedings immediately following, unless intended to disguise his real designs. For the 24th, in the morning, his Lordship came on board again, and calling another council of war of Flag Officers, read to them the letter from the King of Spain of the second of September, N.S., and, after some discourse and debates, laid a memorial before them that, whereas it had been resolved in two several councils of war of General Officers, of the 16th and 22nd, that the attack of Barcelona could not be made with any hopes of success; and that the King of Spain in his letter seemed desirous to have eighteen days spent in attempts against Barcelona; and that, by a letter of the 26th of July, the Lord Treasurer of England seemed to infer the Instructions relating to the Duke of Savoy and services in Italy should be attempted; and when the service of Barcelona should be judged impracticable, their next article

in course was to use all means for the assistance of the Duke of Savoy and services in Italy : he offered to the council of war these two points ; whether after eighteen days the fleet could accompany the army in an enterprise to be made on shore ; and whether, if the forces were immediately embarked within seven days, the time yet allowed their passage to succour the Prince of Savoy, and to perform the services yet possible in Italy. This proposal (which so plainly tended to render the proposed attack for eighteen days impracticable or ineffectual, and make the admirals accountable for the consequences) seemed a little incongruous from his Lordship, who had but two days before in the last land council given such extraordinary reasons for the attack. So that he manifestly promoted the opinions of the other generals against his own, or promoted his real designs under the appearance of other men's, tending to the same point, as the council of the 16th, which he agreed in, though otherwise dressed up ; namely, to draw over the fleet to prefer the cause of the Duke of Savoy before that of the King of Spain ; notwithstanding they had in their council of the 19th, delivered their opinion upon their Instructions so clearly, as to the main end they were designed for ; which opinion was now strengthened by the King of Spain's desire to the same effect. They therefore came to these prudent and honest resolutions, that if it should be resolved to attack Barcelona (for this they judged the first thing to be resolved upon) as by the King of Spain's desire in his letter of the second of September, N.S., all reasonable and possible assistance should be given from the fleet to carry on the work ; that if the troops should make a march by land towards Tarragona and Valencia, the

fleet should attend and assist to their utmost in that march ; that if the General Officers were of opinion that Barcelona was not to be attacked but with apparent ruin to the army and desired to come off, the boats should be ready to embark them ; and when the General Officers represented that they could do little or no service in Spain, but might be of great service in Italy provided they all embarked in a week, the fleet might accompany them to Nice or thereabouts. These resolutions of the Admirals seem to have destroyed this Italian scheme, and to have determined His Catholic Majesty in his resolution to carry on the siege, notwithstanding the fixed opinion of the greater part of the land Generals to the contrary.

The 27th, Brigadier Stanhope came on board with the resolution of a council of war of land Generals held the 26th, wherein they desired (since the King of Spain was resolved, but contrary to their opinions, to make an attempt for eighteen days) the Admirals would consider, if from the fleet they could afford 1500 men to be upon duty, and work in opening the trenches every day, as also to ply the cannon on a battery of fifty-two guns, besides the 1100 marines already in the camp. At the same time they received the Lord Peterborough's opinion, as Admiral, in writing, directly against complying with this demand,<sup>1</sup> and recommending the

<sup>1</sup> ' Agreed to it, being satisfied that such a number (as 1500 seamen besides the marines) could no way be spared ; and well knowing that I could never come up to it in my private judgment ; but more particularly, having that very morning received by the Charles Galley letters, which, in my opinion, did much recommend the services in Italy ; to which in my judgment I inclined for the public service.' Thus his Lordship, as Admiral, was of a contrary opinion to what he had resolved as General.—Cp. *Impartial Inquiry*, p. 31. *Author's Note.*



services in Italy. 'Upon which,' (as they say in the Council) the Earl of Peterborough not thinking fit to afford them his company at that great council, they came to a resolution to send 2500 armed men, including those belonging to the fleet already on shore; which would reduce them under their middle complement, sick men included. And the Dutch agreed to assist with 600 men; but [it was agreed] that upon notice of the enemy at sea, both seamen and marines should immediately be embarked; and that immediate notice should be sent them, when it was designed the men and guns should be landed. But though the fleet so readily concurred with the demands of the land-forces to carry on the siege, and there seemed no difficulty remaining, the Lord Peterborough with the majority of the land Generals would not consent to it; but in two councils of war, the 28th and 30th, resolved the proposed attempt for eighteen days should not be made; but to embark for Italy for the service of the Duke of Savoy, and desired the fleet might carry them to Nice, as if nothing had been intended by the proposal<sup>1</sup> but to amuse only and waste time. Whereupon King Charles, in the greatest distress, wrote to Sir Clowdisley Shovell that though his Lordship left him, he was resolved to stay, in hopes the fleet would never permit such a cruel abandoning.<sup>2</sup> After this,

<sup>1</sup> Previous proposal.

<sup>2</sup> From the Camp, *Sept.* 8, N.S.

HON. SIR,—His Catholic Majesty being in the greatest trouble in the world to find my Lord Peterborough again resolved to leave this enterprise, hath his only recourse to you. Hearing His Majesty declare that, if his Lordship persists in his resolution to go away, His Majesty, finding that without reason his crown and so good subjects shall be sacri-

three days passed, and nothing was done in relation to the siege; but his Lordship at last offered as an expedient to march to Tarragona, which His Majesty of necessity accepted of, since nothing else could be obtained.

Accordingly, the 31st instant, Lord Peterborough came off, and at a Council of Flag Officers acquainted them that His Majesty and he had agreed to march with the army to Tarragona, and proposed to assist with the fleet, what lay in their power, which they came unanimously to a resolution to comply with; so that the attempt upon Barcelona seemed wholly laid aside. But the King even doubted of my lord in this, and therefore desired the Admirals<sup>1</sup> to interpose with him to come to a determination in it.

They had been now twenty days before Barcelona with the fleet and army, and nothing undertaken against the place; on the contrary, were about to leave it behind them, with a shame equal to a defeat, and certainly had done so but for the vigilant Prince of Hesse, who was as assiduous to press the siege as my Lord Peterborough to obstruct it. His Highness indeed knew the place better than any other, having

ficed, is resolved to stay with them, happen what will. Thus I must acquaint you with it, in hopes that you will never permit such a cruel abandoning, and take your measures accordingly. The King begs it of you as the least favour, and entreats you in the most submissive manner, to find out a way that His Majesty may not be the sacrifice of fools and knaves.

I am, with great truth, &c.

GEORGE, PRINCE OF HESSE.

*Impartial Inquiry into the Management of the War in Spain*, 8vo., 1712, pp. 34, 35.

<sup>1</sup> Prince of Hesse's letter to Sir Clowdisley Shovell, of 9th of September, N.S. *Ibid.* p. 41.

been Viceroy of Catalonia in King Charles II's time ; and having defended Barcelona against the Duke of Vendôme. And as he had all along been contriving to obviate the objections of the land Generals against carrying on the siege, [he] at length proposed to the Earl of Peterborough a method both practicable and effectual to reduce the place ; namely, by surprising and taking the citadel and castle of Montjuich, which by its advantageous situation commanded the city. To perform this, he desired only 1000 men, which he himself would both conduct and command in the attempt.

His Lordship therefore, at the Prince's request, having taken a view of Montjuich and the town on that side, and weighed His Highness's reasons, and considered the manner in which he intended to proceed in the attack, found the design so feasible, that he could not object to it and therefore wisely joined in it, not only granting the Prince the 1000 men he desired, but likewise resolved to support His Highness himself with 1000 men more, and some dragoons. In the meantime scaling-ladders and all things necessary for the attempt were got in readiness, and on Sunday, the second of September, about six in the evening, a detachment of 400 Grenadiers, under the command of Colonel Southwell, with 600 foot to support them, marched towards Tarragona, by the way of Serja.

About ten at night they made directly to the fort, and about midnight the first detachment was followed by 1000 men more, and to them were joined some dragoons, who were posted to hinder the horse that might come out of the town to cut them off. The greatest part of the way not being passable for above one man abreast



and the night very dark, it was break of day by that time they came to the foot of the mountain ; and some miquelets<sup>1</sup> who belonged to the enemy, giving the alarm, the Prince of Hesse at his arrival was received by a general discharge of their artillery and small arms.

Hereupon the Prince ordered Colonel Southwell to begin the attack, which he performed with great bravery, driving the enemy from their outworks, and obliged them to retire into the donjon or castle. Upon this success, the Prince of Hesse Darmstadt being desirous to push forward and possess himself of a post that would hinder the enemy's communication with the town, advanced with great eagerness through all the fire from two bulwarks and a curtain, without any shelter, and was shot with a musket-ball ; which, passing through his thigh, tore an artery, by which losing a great quantity of blood, after he had marched about fifty paces, animating his men as though he knew nothing of his being wounded, [he] at last fell down. The Prince being thus fallen, they carried him to a little house that was near, and as soon as he was brought thither, before they could look upon the wound, he expired, to the inexpressible grief of the King, the officers, soldiers and seamen, and particularly the Spaniards, for the loss of so great and so good a man.

This unhappy accident put the soldiers in great confusion, and at the same time the Marquis de Rosburg marched out of the town to succour the line of communication, bringing a supply of 200 Grenadiers to the citadel. Upon which our

<sup>1</sup> Armed Catalonian peasants ; so called after a former captain.

detachment retreated. But the Earl of Peterborough putting himself at the head of the detachment, regained the works; whereby the communication betwixt the town and citadel was entirely cut off. Hereupon it was resolved to ply the enemy with bombs and grenades. Accordingly, the 4th, 5th, and 6th, 158 bombs and carcasses were thrown into the place by the bomb-vessels; which caused a great fire for two hours in the city. But this had little effect; till, the 6th, a shell, falling into the magazine, blew it up; and our people in the outworks, taking the opportunity of the confusion of the enemy, forced into the castle and possessed it; making all they found therein prisoners of war.

Upon this success, his Lordship acquainted the Admirals by a memorial, that if any thing made it possible to take the town of Barcelona, it was to carry on the attack; and therefore desired the succours promised in the council of war of the 27th ultimo, as also about forty guns from the fleet, 24 and 18-pounders; and the assistance of the fleet in bombarding and cannonading. And the Admirals unanimously came to a resolution to send them ashore, and also ten brass 24-pounders. Accordingly the men and guns with their appurtenances were put on shore to be placed on the batteries; and the bomb-ships continuing the bombardment from the 6th at night to the 11th, 321 bomb-shells and carcasses were thrown into the city.

The 11th, the trenches were opened, and three of the youngest captains of the fleet that had not taken post, and six lieutenants, were ordered to command, by turns, the gunners of the fleet that were employed in the batteries on

shore. And the bomb-vessels, which had been prevented by a great swell some days, continued the bombardment. The 17th, the great battery of thirty guns was opened, and fourteen of them began to play with great execution upon that part of the wall where a breach was designed. The siege going on now in earnest, the Lord Peterborough came aboard, and represented to the Admirals the great necessity he laboured under for want of money to subsist the army and carry on the siege and services in Catalonia, and therefore desired the assistance of the fleet. Upon which they came to a resolution to send his Lordship 40,000 dollars, out of the contingent and short allowance money of the fleet; and the 19th, they came to a resolution to continue longer before Barcelona than they had at first agreed; to give all the assistance they could, and to lay a fireship ashore near the arsenal, with 200 barrels of gunpowder; and a further demand being made for guns for the battery, they landed from the fleet fourteen more, which made in all seventy-two, whereof thirty were 24-pounders.

The bomb-vessels continued to bombard the town from the sea, as the weather would permit; having from the 14th to the 19th, thrown in 556 shells. The 20th, a demand was made for more shot; and the Flags, being called together, came to a resolution to supply the batteries with all the 24 and 18-pound shot in the fleet, except forty rounds. Two days after, the Prince of Lichtenstein and the Earl of Peterborough, having desired, at the request of His Catholic Majesty, that the town of Lerida might for its better security be furnished with some barrels of powder; and a further supply of shot being demanded



ashore for the batteries ; it was considered by the Flag Officers in a council of war, and they agreed to furnish fifty barrels of gunpowder for Lerida, and to send so many more 24 and 18-pound shot ashore, as would reduce the English to thirty rounds, as likewise to be further assistant upon timely notice given them thereof. The next day the bomb-vessels threw 154 shells into the city.

By this time the breach being made, and all things prepared for an attack, the 23rd, at night, the town was again summoned ; whereupon they desired to capitulate, and hostages were exchanged ; on the part of the allies, Brigadier Stanhope ; and on the enemy's, the Marquis de Rivora, and all hostilities ceased. The Viceroy made several extravagant demands, the debating whereof continued till the 28th. Amongst other things he demanded to be conducted to Tarragona or Tortosa, but they convinced him of the impossibility of it ; the latter having declared for King Charles, and the other being actually besieged. He desired afterwards to be transported with the garrison by sea to St. Feliu de Guixols near Palamos, and to be conducted from thence to Gerona. This was at last granted him ; and accordingly, the 28th of September, the capitulation was signed in the evening ; and it was agreed amongst other points that the 'Angel Gate' and bastion should be immediately delivered up to the army of the allies, and the whole city four days after, when the garrison should march out with all the marks of honour ; with sixteen pieces of cannon and three mortars. That day and the following it blew a storm of wind, with thunder, lightning and rain, which made the ships ride hard, and obliged them for their security

to veer away to three cables. During this time the Admiral's twenty-oared boat was lost, with three tons of cask, and the lieutenant and twelve of the crew were drowned; and several of the Dutch transports were forced ashore and lost.

The third instant, pursuant to the capitulation, the tenders of the fleet were sent to the mole, to lade the artillery and equipage of the garrison. And thirteen transport ships, under convoy of some English frigates, were appointed to transport the garrison to St. Feliu de Guixols. But the same day the King of Spain received advice that Gerona was surrendered to him; so it was agreed [that] the garrison should be transported to Rosas. Accordingly they were preparing to march, when the exasperated citizens of Barcelona rose upon them, and had certainly murdered the Viceroy, and the adherents of the Duke of Anjou, had they not desired the protection of our forces, who presently marched into the city. But this did not hinder the pillaging and rifling a great many houses of those that were enemies to King Charles III. And in the evening the Viceroy with several others were brought on board the ships privately for their greater security, they not daring to stay all night on shore.

Whilst this disturbance happened in the city, the elements seemed no less agitated in the harbour, as conspiring to a general revolution. A water-spout (which had hardly ever been known there) broke in the very mole, attended with a hurricane, and a surprising whirlwind, which overset several loaded settees at anchor, turning them bottom upwards. Men on shore were forced to catch hold of any thing near them to prevent being blown up into the

air, to the great astonishment of the beholders ; and the 5th and 6th was a violent storm of wind, which drove several of the fleet and did great damage, and [was] attended with such violent thunder and lightning, that several of the seamen on board the Prince George and other ships were struck senseless for a considerable time, not only upon the deck, but in the hold of the ships. Several of the Dutch transports were also drove ashore and lost, besides a great many boats.

Thus was the important city of Barcelona reduced to the obedience of King Charles III by the integrity of the Admirals, and the vigilance of the Prince of Hesse. His Majesty some few days after made his public entry into the city under a triple discharge of the cannon of the place ; and it being time for the fleet to return to England, and to dispose things for the winter service, a council of war was held of the Flag Officers, the 8th of October, to consider of some things which had been previously agreed to at a council of General and Flag Officers the first instant ; and they came to a resolution to assist the garrison of Barcelona with 1800 barrels of powder, eight brass 6-pounders, and all the 3-pound shot in the fleet ; that Sir John Leake should be left in the Mediterranean with a squadron, and sail to Lisbon when he should be reduced to seven weeks' allowance for the squadron under his command, which was to consist of fifteen English and ten Dutch ships of the line, with frigates, fireships, bomb-vessels, and an hospital ship.

This disposition being made for the services abroad, Sir Cloudisley Shovell with the gross of the fleet, on the 12th instant, sailed for England, leaving Sir John Leake at Barcelona,



with orders pursuant to the resolution of the council of war. The next day he embarked the marines belonging to the ships of his squadron, and received a visit from the Earl of Peterborough, to wish him a good voyage ; and being now reduced under the allowance of provisions limited for his proceeding to Lisbon, the following day he sailed, in order to make the best of his way thither.

## CHAPTER X<sup>1</sup>

*Sir John Leake's instructions. He sails with his squadron from Barcelona and, after a tedious voyage, arrives at Lisbon.*

HAVING, in the conclusion of the last chapter, given an account of the departure of the Grand Fleet for England and the resolution of a council of war for leaving Sir John Leake abroad with a squadron for the winter service, it will be necessary, before I proceed further, to set down at large the Instructions he received from the Earl of Peterborough and Sir Clowdisley Shovell, in consequence of the said resolution.

*Charles, Earl of Peterborough and Monmouth, &c., and Sir Clowdisley Shovell, Knt., &c., Admirals of Her Majesty's Fleet.*

Whereas, in pursuance of His Royal Highness's orders of the 26th of July last for considering what number of ships it may be convenient to leave at Lisbon under the command of a Flag Officer, with such Instructions as shall be thought advisable by a council of war, when this summer's expedition with the fleet shall be over : it is the opinion of a council of war of English and Dutch Flag Officers, held the first instant, that a squadron of fifteen English and ten Dutch ships of the line, with

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<sup>1</sup> The period covered by this chapter extends from 14th October, 1705, to 16th January, 1706.

frigates, fireships and bomb-vessels, and an hospital ship, be appointed for a winter's squadron to stay abroad.

You are therefore hereby required and directed to take under your command the ships and vessels, in the margin,<sup>1</sup> and such ships of the States General as shall be appointed to join you. And whereas several seamen, marines, &c., belonging to the ships hereby appointed to be under your command, have been ordered ashore to assist in the attack of Barcelona ; you are immediately to direct they be sent for, and taken aboard their respective ships ; and use all probable means to get and keep all the ships and vessels manned to their highest complements.

And, whereas many services may be thought fit to be performed at a council of war of English and Dutch Flag-Officers, and the number of Flags being but one of each nation ; we judge it for the service that when you think it reasonable, you may add five English and a proportion of Dutch, of the oldest Captains to your councils of war, by which you are to govern yourselves.

And whereas the service in these parts may keep you hereabouts somewhat longer than the main fleet ; you are, in pursuance of a council of war dated the 8th instant, to repair with the ships under your command to Lisbon when your provisions are reduced to seven weeks at short allowance, taking with you all the transports, &c. that are by agreement to be discharged there ; unless the Earl of Peterborough have occasion for one or more to remain here ; and upon your arrival at Lisbon, you are to direct the agent for transports immediately to discharge them.

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<sup>1</sup> The Prince George, Second Rate ; the Hampton Court, Bedford, Berwick, Ranelagh, Grafton, Rupert, Burford, Edgar, Third Rates ; the Leopard, Pembroke, Antelope, Panther, Tiger, Newcastle, Fourth Rates ; the Garland, Falcon and Roebuck, Fifth Rates ; the Griffin and Hunter fireships ; the Basilisk and Carcass bombs, and Princess Anne hospital. For Gibraltar, the Flamborough, a Sixth Rate, and Swift sloop.



You are also to consider with the commission there, and direct the refitting and cleaning Her Majesty's ships and vessels as soon as possible ; and order their cruising in such stations as you judge most effectual for disturbing and destroying the enemy ; and so as you may call and have them together upon any emergent and special services.

If the Earl of Peterborough shall advise you that it is necessary for a part, or your whole squadron, to come to the coast of Catalonia, and you have none of Her Majesty's or His Royal Highness's commands to perform, you are to comply with his Lordship's directions, if it shall be thought advisable by a council of war. And when the ministers of England and Holland residing at Lisbon, or the Earl of Galway, shall on any occasion offer to you to send to the assistance of the army under the Earl of Peterborough any men, arms, ammunition, or money, you are to consider at a council of war how far you are able to assist in the performance of the same.

When application shall be made by the commanding officer at Gibraltar for ammunition, victuals, stores and provisions, of which the garrison shall stand in need, they are to be supplied from time to time with what shall be judged necessary, and may be spared from the fleet ; and you are, upon your going out of the Straits, to inform yourself of the condition of that garrison, and supply them with what they want as soon as you can, directing receipts to be taken of the proper officers, into whose custody the said provisions, stores, &c., shall be delivered : and during the winter, you are to consider at a council of war what may be necessary for the relieving and supplying Gibraltar and Barcelona, and the guarding the coast of Portugal, as the Treaty requires ; and send home to the secretary to His Royal Highness an account from time to time of your resolutions and proceedings for His Royal Highness's information.

Dated on board the *Britannia*, before Barcelona, October the 9th, 1705.

PETERBOROW,  
CLOWD. SHOVELL.

Conformable to the second article of these Instructions, the same day that Sir Clowdisley Shovell sailed with the fleet for England, Sir John embarked the marines and seamen from on shore on board of the respective ships of his squadron to which they belonged. And being already reduced below the allowance of provisions for carrying them to Lisbon, he left Barcelona the 14th of October, leaving behind him the *Antelope* and *Newcastle* to attend the Lord *Peterborough*; and the *Hampton Court*, *Berwick*, *Suffolk*, *Edgar*, *Rupert* and *Burford*, under orders to convoy some transports, which had the Viceroy<sup>1</sup> and part of the garrison of Barcelona on board to be landed at Malaga.

The 21st of November, the fleet being in want of water by reason of their long passage from Barcelona, the same was taken into consideration at a council of war; and there being no prospect of a fair wind, it was agreed to bear away for *Altea Bay* to supply themselves, and as soon as that was completed to put to sea again, and endeavour to gain their passage to Lisbon. Three days after they anchored in the bay, landing the marines to protect their watering. Here Sir John received a letter the day following from the Governor of *Denia*, acquainting him he was in great want of ammunition; whereupon he sent him ten barrels of powder; and whilst he was at *Altea* what money he had he distributed to the ships' companies to buy fresh provisions, which saved the lives of many, and was a great relief to all.

Having completed watering the ships, the 26th he sailed. Three days after, he chased two ships under Turkish colours, which were supposed

<sup>1</sup> Francisco de Velasco.

to be French ; but they could not come up with either. He continued in this manner to make the best of his way, but with little success by reason of contrary winds ; sometimes calms and sometimes hard gales, which blew away their sails ; till at last being no longer able to supply each other's wants in that respect, they were forced to use husbandry with what they had left. Sir John kept company with the Dutch till the 8th of December ; when his provisions growing very short, he was obliged to leave them off of Carthagera, in order to make the best of his way for Gibraltar, to provide both for them and himself, leaving them reduced to two pounds of bread per man a week ; and not for above five weeks at that allowance. In this distress, to forward relief to themselves and the Dutch from Lisbon, the 14th of December he wrote a letter by Captain Hobart, directed to the Commander-in-Chief of Her Majesty's ships at Lisbon, relating to the circumstances of their provision ; that it was uncertain how long it might be before they had a wind, and therefore he could not give him any directions how to send them provisions for the particular use of the ships with him ; but as the garrison of Gibraltar would soon be in want, he desired he would dispatch some thither, that he might share with them if he did not get out of the Straits in time ; that he believed three weeks was the longest that they could hold out at the short allowance they then were, so that the utmost dispatch ought to be made to relieve them ; that the ships that convoyed the victuallers should call at Lagos, if they met with the wind easterly after they got about the [Southward] Cape, to which place he would send a ship, to give notice of his passing by ; but if the wind should be westerly,



to proceed directly to Gibraltar, where he hoped to be in a few days, having left the Dutch to take care of themselves ; for they had so many heavy sailers, it was impossible for them to get thither without a fair wind.

At the same time he dispatched an answer to a letter he had received from Major-General Shrimpton, Governor of Gibraltar, desiring supplies of money and stores, which he could not spare him till he got to Lisbon. As to money, he told him it was not in his power to supply him, having lent what little stock he had of his own to his men to buy them refreshments when they were at Altea : and though it was usual for Flag Officers commanding a squadron to have money of the Queen's for contingencies, Sir Clowdisley Shovell could only leave him credit at Lisbon.

The 20th and 21st, it blew a hard storm of wind ; when the Prince George, lying by under a mizzen, shipped a great sea, which staved a nine-oared boat all to pieces in the tackles, though hoisted up under the upper tier of guns, and a plank in the ten-oared boat upon the booms.<sup>1</sup> The 23rd, the squadron were ordered to two pounds of bread per man a week. Two days after, the Leopard in a hard gale of wind, having lost her main-mast, and sprung her fore-mast, was ordered to go into Table-Round<sup>2</sup> (being near) in order to secure it, with the Bedford to assist her ; Sir John designing to go in there himself. But the wind springing up to the N.N.E. he bore away for Gibraltar, which he reached the 27th. Here he was in hopes to

<sup>1</sup> ' Bombs,' author's spelling.

<sup>2</sup> Presumably ' Mesa de Roldan,' Lat. 36.57 N., Long. 1.54 W.

have found a supply of provisions. But the garrison could only supply him with a small quantity of pork, 3024 pounds of bread, and thirteen firkins of butter. And the ships with him, having had no oil for a considerable time, and being reduced to two pounds of bread per man a week, and to half allowance of all other species, obliged him to take out of a merchant ship, called the *Mary Galley*, that was in her way from Genoa to London, thirty bags of rice and fourteen casks of oil; giving the master a certificate thereof, in order to his being paid by the commissioners of the victualling upon his arrival in England; the rice being to supply the want of bread. This however was afterwards made a matter of complaint, as will be observed in its place. At Gibraltar was an ambassador from the Emperor of Morocco, who desiring a passage from thence to Lisbon, in order to go for England, he was received on board with his retinue. Sir John sailed from Gibraltar the 5th of January, and two days after had the good fortune, off Cape St. Vincent, to meet the *Pembroke*, *Roebuck* and *Falcon* with provisions on board, part whereof he took out for the sustenance of his men, who for want of it were for the most part sick, and continually dropping off. By the *Pembroke* he received the following letter from the English Envoy at Lisbon, dated the 6th of January, N.S.

SIR,—It is with a great deal of concern that I write this. The long stay you have been forced to make, the terrible storms, and continual ill weather we have had, and the little provisions you have with you, have given me great uneasiness. The last wishes I make at night, and the first desires I have in the morning are for your safety. I send the packet which came from England

for you, and I would very willingly, for this month past, have sent the Queen's orders and money to my Lord Peterborough, and money to Gibraltar ; but the utmost endeavours and most earnest desires of mine have not been able for near a month to prevail with the frigate I had got cleaned and refitted to sail, for want of safe orders. I have earnestly desired, for this three weeks past, to send out provisions to you, having them ready, and proper transports to carry them ; but my desires in that likewise are not thought reasonable. Sir William Jumper has done me the favour to let me put on board the Pembroke 10,000 dollars for Gibraltar, where they are extremely wanted. I therefore request you that in case we are so fortunate, that this ship meet you in your way hither from Gibraltar, that you will please to send her or some other ship forward to Gibraltar, with the money and my letters ; and since it hath absolutely been refused me to let me send away any provisions whatsoever, even some flour to supply bread in case of necessity ; I beg you, that if your own necessity doth not require it, you will please to let some provisions, especially bread or flour go forward for Gibraltar. I have nothing to add, but my hearty prayers for your safety, and my earnest wishes to see you here.

Being with great truth and respect, &c.

JO. METHUEN.

This letter shows that his Excellency was at that time upon better terms with Sir John than he had formerly been ; and indeed it became necessary they should be so, to avoid the intrigues of the Portuguese and Dutch, who, though true to their own particular interest, nevertheless concurred to our prejudice. It likewise discovers how insufficient the orders were, that had been left by the Joint Admirals with the ships at Lisbon ; that none of the services required by the Ambassador, though absolutely necessary, could be complied with ; and [this omission] (if as



represented) was the sole cause of that distress the English and Dutch suffered for want of provisions ; which his Excellency says, he had ready with ships to carry them three weeks before, but could not dispatch for want of safe orders. It was undoubtedly so ; for had it been otherwise, the commanders would have been called to account by a court martial. Sir John having, as I said, taken out part of the provisions, dispatched the Pembroke and Roebuck to Gibraltar with the money for that garrison as his Excellency desired, with orders afterwards to return to Lisbon ; and if they should meet with the Dutch in their way, or at Gibraltar, to deliver them the provisions they brought for him ; but if they should not meet them, to leave it at Gibraltar. And the Falcon he ordered to cruise for three weeks off of the Southward Cape ; but being short of her complement, and the men falling sick, she was obliged to return to Lisbon ten days afterwards.

Notwithstanding the miserable condition the squadron were reduced to through the scarcity of provisions, they were not idle ; for whilst they were detained in the Straits, two of the squadron chased ashore near Alicante a French settee laden with wax and hides from Barbary, and burnt her. And soon after another was taken, laden with broadcloth and serge, bound to Cadiz ; which was afterwards unfortunately lost in bad weather. And presently after they got out of the Straits, they took a French letter of marque ship, of 26 guns and 130 men (prisoners included) laden with wine, oil, and Spanish wool, bound from Cadiz to Dunkirk. And after a miserable voyage of thirteen weeks and three days, to their inexpressible comfort, they arrived

at Lisbon the 16th of January,<sup>1</sup> having been reduced in that time to a biscuit a day, and sometimes to half a biscuit, and three weeks no bread: water was likewise wanting some part of the time; so that many of those who recovered the sickness, may be said to have perished for want of provision. By this means the sickness, which had been amongst them the whole campaign, was much increased, and many died. In the *Prince George*, Sir John's own ship, no less than fifty were thrown overboard in this passage, besides three times that number in a dangerous condition; and reckoning from the time Captain Martin first completed her complement of men at Portsmouth, to this arrival at Lisbon, there had died above 300. I believe there never was an instance of so long a passage from Barcelona to Lisbon. But this tedious passage, with the unhappy effects of it, were in a great measure owing to that usual clog which prevented him in most of his undertakings. For the Dutch ships not being able to ply to windward in case of a contrary wind, as the English could, it frequently happened in a night's sail they were hull to to-leeward; and the latter were frequently obliged to bear down three or four leagues to join them. And being obliged to keep them company as long as he could brought on those inconveniences which followed, and which would have been avoided, had he made the best of his way from Barcelona without them. They indeed were in a wretched condition and at the last extremity, when they had also the good fortune to meet the *Pembroke* and *Roebuck* in their way to Gibraltar, and received from them

<sup>1</sup> 1706.

the provisions Sir John had ordered to be delivered them ; without which, in all probability, they must have starved. But encouraged by this seasonable supply, they pursued their voyage, and arrived at Lisbon nine days after the English.



## CHAPTER XI<sup>1</sup>

*Transactions at Lisbon. Sir John receives orders to stop the galleons in Cadiz, which he attempts, but is prevented by the sinister practices of the Portuguese; with his proceedings afterwards, till his arrival at Gibraltar.*

UPON Sir John's arrival at Lisbon, he immediately began to put in execution that part of his Instructions relating to the refitting and cleaning his squadron, which had been so much retarded by his long passage. And in this business he did not fail to meet with the usual difficulties, by the dilatoriness of the Portuguese, as well as by the want of necessary supplies from England. Nevertheless, besides what was enjoined him by Sir Cloudisley Shovell's Instructions, he met with more work cut out for him, required to be done with the greatest expedition, as if he had been master of every conveniency to perform it. For he found a packet at Lisbon from England with orders from His Royal Highness, and several letters of advice of the preparations the French were making. By the former of these it was recommended to him, as one of the most considerable services he could perform, to use his

<sup>1</sup> The period covered by this chapter extends from 16th January to 29th March, 1706.

best endeavours to stop the galleons, which they had intelligence were getting ready at Cadiz to proceed under convoy of Monsieur du Casse to the West Indies ; or if they should get out, to endeavour to destroy them. He was likewise empowered by another order to give such assistance to the Duke of Savoy as should be judged proper by a council of war. And whereas there were coming from England four Third Rates, with several victuallers and store-ships, as also transport ships with two regiments of foot for Catalonia, he was to consider in what manner the said forces might be most speedily and safely conveyed thither, and to put it in execution without loss of time. And he was also to consider of the like method for the safe conveying of three other regiments of foot, which were coming from Ireland under convoy of five sail of men-of-war, which he was to dispatch back to England, as soon as they had seen their convoy safe to Lisbon. Accompanying these orders, were several extracts of letters of intelligence from Paris and other parts ; importing there was a general fitting out at sea in all the ports of France [of ships] which were to be ready by the 17th of April ; that the squadron fitted out at Toulon was to cruise, to intercept the succours that should be sent to Catalonia ; that six of the King's <sup>1</sup> big ships that were ready had been joined by three others of sixty guns each and were at sea the 18th of December, making the best of their way for Barcelona ; that the squadrons of Brest and Toulon were to join in the Mediterranean to cruise in that sea in expectation of joining the Grand Fleet ; that they had got abundance of

<sup>1</sup> Louis XIV's.

provisions together of all sorts, and a great number of large shallops, so contrived that they were in pieces but could soon be put together for making a descent, each shallop being capable to hold 100 men ; that they talked of making a descent upon Surinam or Curaçoa which belonged to the Dutch ; but that it was rather believed [that they intended] to block up the Archduke by sea and land in Barcelona, before the English and Dutch could put to sea again. He received likewise some further information of the preparations and forwardness of the galleons at Cadiz and the dispositions of the people there, by means of a merchant at Lisbon, from the report of a master of a ship lately a prisoner there ; and by a letter from his Excellency Mr. Methuen, of the 4th of February, N.S., [he learnt] that the French were preparing to come to Cadiz to convoy the galleons, which with the flota were both loading in haste ; that there was a great discontent at Cadiz and Seville on that occasion, the Duke of Anjou having turned out the President, Prior and Consuls of the India House, and by his own authority named new ones, which had greatly disgusted the Spaniards concerned in the commerce of the Indies, many of them seeming to desire that our fleet might appear to hinder the going of the galleons ; and [that] the Government showed great jealousy and distrust of all the Spaniards of any concern in this matter. Upon these advices, Sir John detached the Hampton Court and Falcon to proceed to Cadiz, with orders, having made some discovery of the readiness of the enemy and got what intelligence they could, to make the best of their way back to him. Soon after, Vice-Admiral Wassenaer arrived, having met the Pembroke and Roebuck in their



way to Gibraltar, and been supplied with provisions, as was mentioned in the close of the last chapter.

In the meantime, Sir John removed his flag on board the *Ranelagh*, a Third Rate of eighty guns, the 27th instant; the *Prince George* being so leaky that there was a necessity for her being careened before she could put to sea again. But the rest of the ships, that were under immediate orders, he caused to be heeled and tallowed and put into the best posture for the sea that his present bad circumstances would permit. There was extreme want of anchors and cables, and though the Commissioner had bought all the naval stores that he could possibly get, yet much was wanting; and they were obliged to make new sails for the ships that came in with him last, which took up some time and, together with the badness of the weather ever since his arrival at Lisbon, had been no small hindrance to the dispatch of affairs.

The 1st of February, the *Pembroke* and *Roebuck* arrived from Gibraltar, bringing with them a French privateer of twenty-four guns they had taken in their passage. Sir John immediately ordered them to sea again to convoy some Virginia ships 150 leagues into the sea, pursuant to His Royal Highness's orders. The next day the *Northumberland* with the victuallers, and the Dutch men-of-war with their convoys arrived. The third, the *Lichfield* prize and *Anglesea* were dispatched with some merchant ships for Oporto. The same day the packet from England arrived, which brought advice that the nine ships from Toulon before-mentioned had been joined by one of eighty guns; and that having been at sea, they were so shattered by a storm that they

were forced to return to the Isle Hyères ; but that they were refitted, and since put to sea again, and that thirteen ships more were ordered to be got ready at Toulon to join them. By an order, which Sir John received at the same time, he was directed to send home all the prisoners, he should take, to England, not only to prevent the charge of maintaining them abroad, but that they might be regularly exchanged ; for which purpose they were to be delivered to the agent for the Commissioners of Sick and Wounded and Exchange of Prisoners of War, as soon as they arrived.

By the return of the same packet he dispatched a letter to His Highness's secretary, dated the 8th of February, wherein he acquaints him that he was making all possible dispatch to get his squadron ready for the sea, and likewise of the difficulties he laboured under by the want of all sorts of stores and other conveniences. He then goes on to inform him of the bad state of health in the fleet, and the want of conveniences on shore for the sick and wounded ; and that as to the prisoners, he would take care, pursuant to His Royal Highness's orders, to send them to England as often as opportunity offered ; but that in his opinion, as the enemy set all the prisoners that were carried into Cadiz (and other ports) at liberty, with passports to travel to Lisbon ; it would save a considerable charge to Her Majesty, prevent those infectious distempers and other inconveniences, which their want of clothes and number would cause amongst the ships' companies that carried them to England, to discharge them as often as they were taken ; besides avoiding the disorders often created by being kept under the same roof, and the

convenience of making more room in the hospital for the sick.

The 10th, he received a letter from his Excellency Mr. Methuen, acquainting him that the King of Portugal had desired himself<sup>1</sup> and him<sup>2</sup> would meet with his minister to consider what could be done for the preservation of the Brazil fleet ; and that the meeting was appointed the Monday following at the Secretary's office. Sir John accordingly attended, when taking into consideration the present circumstances of affairs, the ill condition of the fleet, and the difficulties he lay under by His Royal Highness's express orders for relieving Gibraltar and Barcelona, now in a very unhappy situation, they could not come to any resolution.

About the same time the Hampton Court and Falcon returned from the expedition they had been sent upon to look into Cadiz, but had not been there ; bringing with them two privateers they had taken off of Cape Spartel ; one of thirty-eight guns but able to carry forty-four, and the other of thirty-two guns but had hove six overboard, endeavouring to escape. On board these were several English prisoners, whose declaration believing sufficient to discharge the orders they<sup>3</sup> had received, they made the best of their way back to Lisbon, without looking into Cadiz. Upon these advices and orders, a council of war was held the 17th instant ; wherein having considered His Royal Highness's orders of the 15th of October, the 3rd, 4th, and 25th of December, and of the 1st and 28th of January last ; and the secretary's letters of the 3rd, 26th,

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Methuen.

<sup>2</sup> Sir John Leake.

<sup>3</sup> The Hampton Court and Falcon.



and 31st of December ; with the several extracts of letters concerning the naval preparations of the French ; and some papers of intelligence, discovering the disposition of the inhabitants of Cadiz, and that the galleons were fitting out : it was agreed the Panther and Tiger, lately cleaned, should be sent to Barcelona with the money for paying the forces, and as soon as ten English and six Dutch of the line and some frigates and fireships could be got ready, to proceed directly therewith to Cadiz ; and resolved, if they found the galleons in the bay, to go directly in, and endeavour to take and destroy them. There were some ships of war and transports expected with forces from England for Catalonia ; and it was determined, if they timely arrived, to take the former, and leave the transports at Lisbon, since it was not safe to send them up the Straits without a convoy able to protect them. A copy of this council of war Sir John immediately sent to the English Envoy, desiring him at the same time to move the King of Portugal for an embargo to be laid on all shipping till he should sail, to prevent any advice of his preparations and designs being carried by sea to Cadiz, which was accordingly granted.

In the meantime Mr. Schonenburgh, the Dutch minister, who was an artful, designing man, took this occasion to excuse their nation, and ingratiate himself with the Court of Portugal, by laying all the blame upon Sir John for not dispatching a convoy to meet the Brazil fleet, notwithstanding the Dutch officers were unanimous in opinion with him and the rest of the English officers in the council of war. But the Dutch minister had two ends in view by this proceeding—to make a breach between the

English and Portuguese, or at least to promote it as much as possible (which they constantly pursued) to be the better esteemed themselves; and to retard the expedition to Cadiz till the galleons were sailed. Wherein there is too much reason to believe the Portuguese concurred, as will appear more plainly by the sequel.

To accomplish this they sent Mr. Methuen a memorial and solemn protest of the King of Portugal against himself and Sir John Leake, in case he refused to send a convoy of ships directly from Lisbon to meet the Brazil fleet. If he complied with this demand, it would prevent the Cadiz expedition; if not, it would however embarrass the English Admiral, and occasion a delay till that affair was adjusted. This memorial and protest was couched in the strongest terms; declaring that, if the convoy demanded was not dispatched, his Excellency with the chief officers of the fleet must answer for it to the Queen of England and the allies of being the cause of their fleet's being lost, on which depended the continuation, or a total end, of the war in Spain. This protest was made and delivered to the English Ambassador before the council of war, though Sir John did not receive it till some time afterwards, and, it is observable, is dated the 23rd, N.S., the very day after he conferred with the Portuguese minister of state, in company with Mr. Methuen; when having considered his orders, they could not come to any resolution upon the convoy; which, no doubt, would have been insisted upon at that time, had it been found consistent with other services, to be performed in the manner now required.

This memorial and protest, though dated the 12th, O.S., did not come to Sir John's hands

till the 18th, enclosed in a letter from Mr. Methuen, dated the day before; and the reason why it was not sent sooner was because it should not intervene before he had settled his other resolutions; which I find his Excellency and Sir John had agreed was best to be done first, as most beneficial to the common cause and agreeable to his orders from England. 'I could not,' says Mr. Methuen in his letter, 'delay it any longer, not only because the King of Portugal will be concerned to have an answer; but also, being last night with Monsieur Schonenburgh and the Dutch Admiral, I found Monsieur Schonenburgh contriving to lay this delay upon the English, telling me that the Dutch Admiral had desired that you would have proposed it yesterday in the council of war. I doubt not but he will inform the King of Portugal the same, and much more; and therefore I think it concerns us, that it be proposed in a council of war as soon as possible.' He then goes on, 'I must own freely to you this matter is of the last importance; and therefore I have wrote to you in my letter so strongly' (that was for sending a convoy) 'supposing you will lay my letter before the council of war; and as I think the resolution you communicated to me yesterday is extremely good; so I think, having not resolved to cruise before Cadiz, but to attempt the galleons if they are in the bay, you have a very good answer to make to the King of Portugal: that you are going with what ships are ready on an important service, which probably cannot detain you but a few days; when you shall make such a detachment as may protect his,<sup>1</sup> so far as you are able.

<sup>1</sup> The word 'interests' appears to be elided.



Pardon me that I am so free to suggest to you what I would be glad a council of war should resolve to answer ; for after all, you are the entire masters what to answer and what to do ; and which I do not in the least doubt will always be for the service of Her Majesty and the good of England. I have ordered the packet to be dispatched Wednesday night, and should be glad if you could inform me privately, when you hope to be ready, &c., Jo. Methuen.' The other letter of his Excellency's, which this refers to, was of the same date, and in the strongest terms for sending a convoy.

According to his Excellency's desire, the next day Sir John laid that letter with the memorial before a council of war of English and Dutch officers, together with His Royal Highness's positive orders for relieving Barcelona. And they resolved to proceed according to their resolution of the 17th instant ; and when that service was over, to detach as many ships (as could be spared from other services) to endeavour to meet and convoy to Lisbon the Brazil fleet, and with the rest proceed to Gibraltar, and remain there or thereabouts till they should be joined by the ships and transports expected from England.

This resolution he immediately dispatched to the Ambassador, withal desiring him to let him know as soon as possible in what station the King of Portugal would have the English ships cruise to join the Brazil fleet ; for that he hoped to order it so that the Dutch ships might join ours off of Lagos, and proceed from thence to their station. Mr. Methuen returned an answer to this the 21st, at eight at night ; that the Secretary had sent for him between one and

two o'clock to come to a conference, and bring Sir John with him at four o'clock ; which knowing to be impossible, he did not trouble him, but went alone ; that Monsieur Wassenaer being, he supposed, in town, came with Monsieur Schonenburgh, where they debated with the whole council of state till then, and all the hardship had been in effect on him ; that the King of Portugal insisted positively to have the ships go from Lisbon ; but he was confident by several of the council that, if Sir John would resolve to detach eight ships for the convoy (after the service was over) to go directly from thence, without touching anywhere, the King would be very well satisfied. ' Now, I beg you,' says he, ' to consider that this seems to be the very words of the resolution already taken ; and both the Dutch Admiral and Minister have so far already consented, that all will be upon us. Monsieur Wassenaer resolves to send four from thence and have this come to him : and therefore, so far as my opinion can weigh with you, I entreat you by all means possible to consent to this expedient ; and I dare answer with my life, it will be approved in England. Monsieur Wassenaer will come down to you to-morrow to hold a council of war, if it be necessary ; but I think it is already enough in the resolution. If you two do send word to me and Monsieur Schonenburgh to tell the King he may depend upon that, it is enough.'

And in another letter, ' I am glad,' says he, ' that you hope to facilitate the rendez-vous of the vessels in Lagos Bay, because the Dutch Minister is underhand persuading the King that all the easiness comes from the Dutch, and all the difficulties from us ; and therefore,' says he,

'I wish this could be settled before you go.' Sir John having considered this matter, and believing it would be less trouble to order the convoys for the Brazil fleet from Gibraltar or thereabouts than to appoint them a rendez-vous off of Cadiz, lest they should not join so soon as might be expected, acquainted the Ambassador (the 22nd) with his opinion ; which if the Vice-Admiral Wassenaer agreed to, he said, it should not be his fault, if it was not so ordered ; that he had not seen him, but when he did (which he hoped would be in a little time) he did not doubt but they should take such measures concerning the convoys, as would be satisfactory to the Portuguese.

After this there were two more conferences with the council of state, viz., the 21st and 22nd, whereat Mr. Methuen was present ; in both of which the proposal for sending the convoy immediately after the expedition to Cadiz should be finished was rejected by the King of Portugal : but being afterwards represented to His Majesty, a letter was sent from the Secretary of State to his Excellency, Mr. Methuen, in the middle of the night, after the last council, which he dispatched the next morning to Sir John enclosed in one from himself ; by which it appears, that the King with some regret accepted that proposal : for in the Secretary of State's letter it is said that the King being under a necessity to conform himself to the form in which alone his Excellency would agree that the convoy should be given, His Majesty did command him to desire that he would recommend to the English Admiral that after the expedition of Cadiz, which he did presume would be very short, he might with all possible speed detach the four English ships



to go with four Dutch ships, to convoy the Brazil fleets in safety to Lisbon.

In another letter he received at the same time from Mr. Methuen, he thanks him for his last, which had given him notice of his intentions ; because the Dutch Minister, the night before seemed to reflect that he had not spoken anything to Monsieur Wassenauer. 'As it is his whole business,' says he, 'to ingratiate with the Portuguese, and to lessen the good understanding between the Dutch and the English, it is very troublesome to avoid his designs.' And therefore it was his humble request to him that the resolutions he took might be jointly with Mr. Wassenauer, and as soon as he could conveniently ; for by that means the Dutch Minister would not have it in his power to do mischief. 'What I mention relating to Mr. Wassenauer,' says he, 'is only for your private information and caution to avoid the tricks of the Dutch Minister ; for I believe Monsieur Wassenauer is entirely disposed to a good friendship and correspondence with you, and I hope he knows Monsieur Schonenburgh.'

These little intrigues, however, gave Sir John some uneasiness, and made him apprehend ill consequences to himself. For in his answer (which the next day he sent his Excellency), after acknowledging the receipt of his letter with the memorial and rendez-vous of the Brazil fleet, wherein he told him he would take care to do all that possibly he could, 'I cannot imagine,' says he, 'what I have omitted in talking to Vice-Admiral Wassenauer, relating to our proceedings ; neither do I know of any disputes that have happened between us, but what he has agreed to ; except it be my pressing (after the service of Cadiz is over) for our going

to Gibraltar, and remaining there till joined by the convoys from England. But it is plain to me that, notwithstanding all my inclination to serve the King of Portugal, and comply with the Dutch to make them easy, it is to no purpose ; and I am in a fair way of being ruined, without some extraordinary success attend me.'

But, however that was, it appears Sir John had more difficulty to keep a good understanding with the Court of Lisbon than to perform all the services that were required of him ; and this was entirely owing to the evil disposition of the Dutch minister, who made it his constant study to set the Portuguese at variance with the English ; and as he judged this a fit opportunity, so he improved it accordingly.

Having now got over this difficulty of the Portuguese convoy, we must return to our preparations for the Cadiz expedition, in the prosecution whereof Sir John had so much incurred the resentment of the Court of Portugal ; which, however, he was willing to bear, rather than the just reproach (he must otherwise have suffered) of disobeying his orders, and neglecting the King of Spain's interest, and the services of more immediate consequence to the common cause.

Besides the advice they had received of the forwardness of the galleons at Cadiz, the disposition of the people there, and the preparations of the French to convoy them in safety ; they had been further informed by a letter from Mr. Methuen that the absolute order for the going out of the galleons and flota, after all the representations to the contrary, came to Cadiz the 6th of February ; that the galleons began to come down into the bay in two or three

days after against the endeavours of all the Spaniards concerned; that they were all come out of the Puntales into the Bay of Cadiz near the town; that by the sinking of the ships between the Puntales only one ship was able to go in at a time, and that with hazard by reason of the current being there become extreme rapid, so that if our fleet surprised them in the bay, it would be very difficult for them to retire within the Puntales. The person from whom his Excellency had this account was a Spaniard in whom he could confide; and left Cadiz the 17th, N.S., and he added that he saw so much pressing haste made to get the galleons to sea, that he feared they would be gone before our squadron could arrive.

By these advices Sir John was, however, in great hopes to surprise the galleons in Cadiz: and sixteen sail of the line being now almost ready to proceed, viz., ten English and six Dutch, he gave out the rendez-vous and line of battle, with the proper dispositions for going into the bay if they found the enemy there; which, though it did not take effect, yet as they were well concerted and suitable to the occasion, I think it proper to insert, to show the nature of such an attempt.

LINE OF BATTLE.

	Guns.
<i>Hampton Court,</i>	70
<i>Berwick,</i>	70
<i>Pembroke,</i>	60
<i>Roebuck, 40,</i>	
<i>Griffin fireship,</i>	<i>Edgar,</i> 70
<i>Vulture fireship,</i>	<i>Bedford,</i> 70
<i>Carcass bomb,</i>	<i>Ranelagh,</i> 80, Sir John Leake
<i>Falcon, 30,</i>	<i>Northumberland,</i> 70
	<i>Burford,</i> 70
	<i>Grafton,</i> 70
	<i>Rupert,</i> 70



## LINE OF BATTLE.

	Guns.
<i>Salamander</i> fireship, <i>Ripperda</i> ,	52
<i>Etna</i> fireship, <i>Edam</i> ,	64
<i>Schryck</i> bomb, <i>Elswoud</i> ,	72, V. Adm. Wassenaer
<i>Zirickzee</i> ,	64
<i>Beschutten</i> , <i>Medenblich</i> ,	54
<i>Zeelandt</i> ,	64

## LINE OF BATTLE FOR SAILING INTO CADIZ.

	Guns.
<i>Griffin</i> fireship, <i>Hampton Court</i> ,	70
<i>Edam</i> ,	64
<i>Berwick</i> ,	70
<i>Edgar</i> ,	70
<i>Zeelandt</i> ,	64
<i>Salamander</i> fireship, <i>Bedford</i> ,	70
<i>Ranelagh</i> ,	80
<i>Vulture</i> fireship, <i>Northumberland</i> ,	70
<i>Pembroke</i> ,	60
<i>Burford</i> ,	70
<i>Zirickzee</i> ,	64
<i>Etna</i> fireship, <i>Elswoud</i> ,	72
<i>Ripperda</i> ,	52
<i>Grafton</i> ,	70
<i>Carcass</i> bomb, <i>Rupert</i> ,	70
<i>Schryck</i> bomb, <i>Medenblich</i> ,	54

In case of separation before they got to Cadiz, the place of rendez-vous was off of Cape St. Mary's, where they were to remain twenty-four hours; and if Sir John did not join them in that time, they were to proceed and cruise in sight of Cadiz forty-eight hours, and then to proceed to Gibraltar, appointed the place of rendez-vous. And the following directions he gave to the respective ships for going into Cadiz Bay.

FIRST. Every ship to bend a hawser (passing out of the stern-port) to the ring of the anchor he lets go, in order to bring her broadside to bear, if there be occasion.

SECOND. No ship to engage either forts, town, or ships till the Admiral fires.

THIRD. That particular care be taken to put the matches under the direction of a commission or other officer that can be trusted, to prevent the seamen's firing before their proper time.

FOURTH. The barge of every ship to have a fire-grapnel in her, and if any of the enemy's ships should be set on fire and endanger any of the Queen's or States General's, that the boats be sent to tow her or them off; likewise to assist any of the fireships, if any of their galleys should come to attack them, a lieutenant being in each boat.

FIFTH. If there be a French squadron in the bay, that the fireships attempt them first.

SIXTH. The signal for drawing into a line for going into Cadiz bay, is a red flag hoisted at the mizzen-peak (instead of a Union flag) and a gun fired.

SEVENTH. If they should be detained in the bay till night, each Captain was, about seven o'clock the same night, to repair on board the ship wherein Sir John then was for orders, without any further notice.

EIGHTH. That every ship comes to an anchor the most advantageously he can, for annoying the enemy.

NINTH. Every ship's long-boat to have a stream anchor and cable put in her.

TENTH. The ships that will be sent ahead of the fleet to look into Cadiz, upon their discovery of the galleons being in the bay are to hoist a flag at their main topmast-head; if above the Puntales, at their fore topmast-head; but if none be at either place, then a flag at the mizzen topmast-head.

LOSING COMPANY AND MEETING IN THE DAY. The weathermost ship to lower her fore top-gallant-sail, or topsail, and fire two guns distinctly; but if the topsails should be handed,<sup>1</sup> then to hoist the main and fore topsail stay-sails, with the sheets flown, till he is answered by the leewardmost ship, by hauling up his mainsail, foresail, and mizzen, and firing three guns. If in the night, the weathermost ship to hoist four lights, one over the other, where they may best be seen, and the leewardmost to answer by showing three lights, or as many as he can conveniently of equal height, where they may best be seen.

When the Admiral would speak with a Captain of any ship, he will put abroad a pendant, as against that ship's name in the following scheme: if with a lieutenant, the same, and a weft with the ensign: if for a boat without a commission officer, a weft half up the ensign staff.

Red.	White.	Blue.	Yellow.	Places where.
<i>Hampton Court</i>	<i>Berwick</i>	<i>Rupert</i>	<i>Griffin</i> fireship	Main top-mast head
<i>Northumberland</i>	<i>Edgar</i>	<i>Burford</i>	<i>Vulture</i> fireship	Fore top-mast head
<i>Ranelagh</i>	<i>Bedford</i>	<i>Pembroke</i>	<i>Carcass</i> bomb	Mizzen top-mast head
<i>Grafton</i>	<i>Roebuck</i>	<i>Falcon</i>	—	Main top-sail yard-arm

The rendez-vous, with the signals for knowing each other by day or night, were left with the Commissioner at Lisbon and the Governor of

<sup>1</sup> Furled.



Gibraltar, to be communicated to any ships that were to join him; leaving orders<sup>1</sup> with the Commissioner, directing the commanding officer of Her Majesty's ships which he should leave at Lisbon, or might arrive there in his absence, to follow him to Gibraltar with the rest, when the ships of the States General under the command of Captain Norse were ready for the sea, and remain there till further order, taking with them all the Queen's ships that should arrive, not being under immediate orders from His Royal Highness to return to England; as also the transports with forces for Catalonia; victuallers for the squadron, and store-ships for Gibraltar, &c. with other services he himself was under orders to perform. And that the service might not suffer any delay, he empowered the Commissioner, whilst he was absent, to open all orders and letters that should arrive from England from His Highness's secretary; which he was to communicate to the Commander-in-Chief for the time being at Lisbon, and dispatch to him by a felucca the first opportunity.

These previous dispositions being made, as well in relation to the service he was going upon as to what remained to be done at Lisbon; his squadron being ready the 22nd, he anchored in the Bay of Oeiras. Here he waited, as usual, for the Dutch, who did not join him till two days after. Whereupon the next day, being the 25th, early in the morning he got under sail, in order to proceed to Cadiz. But when he was near the bar, to his great surprise, St. Julian's Castle and some of the forts fired several shot at them, which obliged him to anchor again,

<sup>1</sup> *Sc.* And Sir John left orders.

though with much regret ; being rather inclined to pass, notwithstanding their fire ; and he certainly would have done it ; but considering he was upon ill terms already with the Court of Portugal upon account of the Brazil convoy, such a proceeding, at this time, would have been looked upon as a direct insult purposely done in contempt to the King's orders, and consequently have further exasperated His Majesty, who had already threatened a complaint to England. And besides, had he done so, it may well be suspected the Dutch would not have followed his example, whereby the whole odium would have been thrown upon the English, and the service not in the least forwarded by it.

He therefore took the most prudent measures by sending immediately a lieutenant to know the reason ; and had for answer, that their orders from the Duke de Cadival were not to suffer either man-of-war or merchant ship to pass the bar ; though it was notoriously true they suffered five sail to go out the very day after the embargo, two of which were Danes. Upon this answer, he dispatched a letter to his Excellency Mr. Methuen, desiring him to apply instantly to have orders from the court to clear up the mistake ; but in the meantime the wind shifted, which was a bar he could not remove ; and the fleet was thereby prevented sailing that day. The next morning, Mr. Methuen having procured the King's orders, they were dispatched by land to all the castles ; but for more security, he sent a person to Sir John with the same orders, that he might send them by boats to remove the embargo, which, it seems, they<sup>1</sup> had made

<sup>1</sup> The Portuguese.

him lay upon himself ; and as his Excellency observes in his letter, was certainly the greatest negligence of the Port ministers that was possible, and could have happened nowhere else.

The embargo being removed, he sailed the same morning, though too late ; for the loss of twenty-four hours, which he had been detained, proved the disappointment of the design. But proceeding for Cadiz, the 27th, he got the length of the Southward Cape, where he found the wind easterly ; but towards noon it fell calm, and then sprang up westerly ; and soon after veered to the northward and N. by E. which carried him by the next morning the length of Cape St. Mary's ; and it then veering to the N.E., and N.E. by E., he stood to the southward, to lie in the fairway to intercept the galleons, if they got out before the wind would let him go thither. At the same time he ordered the Hampton Court, Grafton and Falcon pink (which were the only clean ships he had with him) to stretch ahead into the station he intended to be in. But that same night, about ten o'clock, he received a letter from Vice-Admiral Wassenaer, acquainting him that a privateer, called the Middleburg Galley, had that moment brought in a prize that left Cadiz that morning, giving an account [that] the flota and galleons sailed from thence the morning before, with a hard gale of easterly wind, under convoy of ten or twelve French ships, most or all of them privateers, and were out of sight of that place by noon.

Upon this advice Sir John soon resolved to pursue, and accordingly steered S.W.½S., and S.W., all night, though with little hopes of overtaking them, unless the easterly winds should have left them when they got the length of the



Southward Cape, as he himself had often experienced. The next morning he saw two sail ahead of him, which they chased, the wind still continuing to blow fresh at E.N.E. By six at night both the ships they chased were taken, being Spaniards, one of them a ship of 24 guns bound to the Canaries and thence to the West Indies; the commander giving an account that he left Cadiz the day after the galleons sailed from thence (agreeing in his relation with the advices they had received the night before), and further, that they had certain intelligence at Cadiz of Sir John's design, and had provided against it accordingly both on shore and at sea with their galleys. And it was shrewdly suspected that this intelligence was carried thither by one of the Danish ships, that sailed from Lisbon the day after the embargo, which did not a little increase the suspicion of foul play in Portugal. Hereupon, it was the general opinion, as well as Sir John's, that it was to no purpose to follow them any farther, but to proceed to Gibraltar pursuant to the resolution in the last council of war. Accordingly he lay by all night, and the next morning being joined by all the squadron (except the Hampton Court, Grafton and Falcon, who had lost company with him when he bore away in the night upon advice of the galleons being sailed) he made sail for that place.

These concurring testimonies make it evident from whence all the delays and obstructions at Lisbon to retard the sailing of the fleet did arise. It is notorious that the Dutch trade extended even to their enemies for advantage, and the Portuguese acted upon the same principle. Such were our noble allies! No wonder then the

Portuguese and Dutch should combine against the English in this expedition ; when the galleons contained more of the wealth of those two nations than [of] Spain. Nay, some of the merchants at Lisbon openly declared they hoped the English fleet would miss the galleons, and others said there was no danger. But to effect this, they were forced to contrive one difficulty to succeed another, till at length their whole designs were too gross to be concealed. I doubt not but the proposal for a convoy for the Brazil fleet was pressed with such earnestness, in order to divide the squadron, and prevent a number of ships being got together time enough to surprise the galleons ; which must have happened, if the first eight ships ready for the sea had been dispatched, as the Court of Portugal demanded ; the whole squadron intended for the Cadiz expedition being but sixteen. But when Sir John had declared (notwithstanding they threatened a protest against him) that he must firstly comply with His Royal Highness's orders to attempt the galleons (they being positive) and after that dispatch a convoy, they were forced to make use of other artifices to obstruct his designs : so that he had no sooner procured an embargo to prevent intelligence going to the enemy, but the Dutch and Portuguese dispatched ships directly to Cadiz to hasten the galleons and acquaint them with the readiness of his squadron ; the certainty whereof was confirmed to Sir John by a letter from his Excellency Mr. Methuen, dated the 14th of March, N.S., acquainting him that by an express from thence he had certain advice that a Genoese from Lisbon had told them he was coming. After this, he was detained two days waiting for the Dutch : and all not

being thought sufficient to secure the galleons, they most absurdly stopped him a day longer under colour of the embargo which he had procured, and which indeed seemed to have been complied with for no other end. By this poor pretence did they at last most basely and treacherously accomplish the business. For if he had not been detained this last twenty-four hours, in all probability he must have fell in with them at sea. It was a true saying of a noble lord in Parliament about this time that 'let our supplies be never so full and speedy, let our management be never so great and proper, yet if it be our misfortune to have allies that are slow and backward, as we are zealous and forward, that hold our hands and suffer us not to take any opportunities that offer, I cannot see,' says he, 'what it is we are reasonably to expect.'<sup>1</sup> Which was the present case with respect to the Dutch, who, as the same noble lord expressed it, 'had the advantage of a trading war.' This indeed appeared so flagrant to the whole nation that in the same sessions it was proposed (in the clause for adding 10,000 men to act in conjunction with the Dutch) to be added, 'provided they (the Dutch) be obliged to leave off trading with France.' But this proposal, however reasonable, passed in the negative, and they continued as they begun. Nor were the Portuguese at all honester, making everything subservient to their own particular interest; not only preferable to all other considerations, but in direct opposition to the general interest of the grand allies. It was therefore a hard task to perform the public service between the joint and separate intrigues

<sup>1</sup> Lord Haversham's speech, November 15, 1705.



of the Portuguese and Dutch, which must somehow or other interfere upon every occasion. And consequently to act for the general benefit was to make them both enemies. Two such allies therefore were enough to have ruined, and *would* have ruined any admiral that had not been attended with such extraordinary success as Sir John was.

But to return to the squadron, which having given over the fruitless pursuit of the galleons, were making the best of their way for Gibraltar. The 3rd of March the fleet lay by ; and a council of war was called to consider about the convoy for the Brazil fleet, but came to no resolution ; it being the opinion of the council of war that, as they had no less ships than seventy guns, they could not possibly be spared from the service of Catalonia. They therefore deferred their resolution till the arrival of four smaller ships that were expected to join them at Gibraltar. The wind continued easterly without any remarkable occurrence till the 15th, when Sir John dispatched a letter to Mr. Methuen at Lisbon. This letter was dated from on board the Ranelagh, in the latitude of 35.4 N., Cape Spartel bearing east twenty-five leagues. It was to desire his Excellency to open any orders that might come to him from England ; and if they were of consequence, to forward them to him ; likewise to call for any orders that might come to Commissioner Wright's hands, who had his directions to open them ; that the wind continued easterly, which made him very uneasy, when he considered the several services that were enjoined him, especially that of Catalonia ; for that it might be feared the enemy might have a stronger squadron before Barcelona than he should be

able to make ; and therefore he desired all the intelligence that could be got, before he proceeded to Gibraltar. Three days afterwards he detached the *Berwick* to Tangier, to take on board some captives, and then to make the best of her way to Gibraltar.

Sir John had not in all this time received any letters from the Earl of Peterborough since he came from Barcelona, nor any account of the enemy's proceedings in Catalonia. But on the 19th of March, being joined by the *Grafton*, her Captain acquainted him that in his cruise he spoke with an English runner from Genoa, who gave an account that Count Toulouse, with seventeen men-of-war, sailed from Toulon the 23rd of February, nine of which were ships of three decks ; and that they were bound for Barcelona with forces ; that Monsieur Duquesne had been there with nine sail more some time before, and that six more were daily expected to join them. The 23rd, the *Grafton* was detached to cruise off Cadiz whilst the easterly wind lasted ; and soon after, the *Panther* and *Tiger* joined the fleet, in ten days from Denia,<sup>1</sup> where they had put the money on shore by order of the Lord Peterborough, who was at Valencia, which is within twelve leagues of that place. The Captain of the *Panther* likewise brought an account that the enemy had about 4000 horse and foot betwixt Alicante and Valencia, but could get no perfect account what number of ships were upon the coast of Catalonia, nor whether the French intended to besiege Barcelona.

The 24th, he ordered the *Falcon* to Lisbon with letters, and to clean. The same day the

<sup>1</sup> Lat. 38.50 N., Long. 0.10 E.

Leopard and Garland joined him from Gibraltar, and soon after the Pembroke and Roebuck from the same place.

The 26th, the fleet being about three leagues E.S.E. from Cape Spartel, a council of war was called to consider further concerning the convoy of the Brazil fleet ; and it was unanimously their opinion that, since the east winds had detained them so long out of the Straits and from being joined by the four ships as they expected, it was too late to send the eight English and Dutch ships (formerly designed to meet the Brazil fleet) as believing that they were by that time either arrived at Lisbon, or so near that port that the meeting with them would be very uncertain ; and considering the present bad posture of affairs in Catalonia required their speediest and utmost assistance and that the other service depended upon various accidents, it was resolved that it might be of very ill consequence to the allies in general and the King of Spain in particular to divide their strength by detaching any ships to go upon the aforesaid service, till Catalonia should be succoured. The next day the Burford joined him from Lagos ; and the following, the Hampton Court with a prize. And at length, after a tedious passage, by contrary winds, the 29th, the fleet arrived in Gibraltar Bay ; the officers in general being greatly incensed against the Portuguese for their disappointment in this fruitless expedition, which had flattered them with golden hopes.





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